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Financing and liquidation of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia

Comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of the administration and management of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC)

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The establishment of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) marked the beginning of the rapid expansion of peacekeeping operations in terms of both number and scope, an expansion that has only recently ended. As such, UNTAC was a learning experience for all involved, in the field, at United Nations Headquarters and in the international community as a whole. The present report encompasses the planning, establishment, administration and management of UNTAC, and provides information in some detail on the various administrative and logistic areas. It outlines the problems faced, the attempts to overcome those problems at the time, the lessons learned from them and new policies and procedures instituted at Headquarters and in the field as a result of the UNTAC experience.

A number of the constraints faced by UNTAC, such as the devastated infrastructure and the need to protect mission personnel from the dangers of war, landmines and banditry, are in fact common to the majority of peacekeeping operations. These factors cannot be eliminated, but the experience gained in UNTAC has resulted in a greater awareness of the need to take such constraints into account during the planning of a mission and in its subsequent operations. One other major constraint faced by UNTAC continues to confront peacekeeping operations today: the severe shortage of experienced

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personnel. The present report clearly describes the consequences of this problem, as well as the only partially successful efforts to overcome it, including revised and streamlined recruitment procedures and provision of training. Continued improvements in this and other areas will require not only the energy and commitment of the staff of the United Nations, but also the firm support of Member States.

The present report, concentrating as it does on the UNTAC experience, is but one facet in the efforts to improve the capacity of the United Nations for peacekeeping. It is, nevertheless, linked to the larger efforts, including on such issues as measures to improve the response time for the establishment of a mission, procurement reform and assets management.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in accordance with paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 48/255 of 26 May 1994, by which the Secretary-General was requested to provide a comprehensive evaluation of all aspects of the administration and management of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) with a view to utilizing the experience in other peacekeeping operations. The experience gained through this unique peacekeeping operation, the largest and most complex in the history of the United Nations, which has been augmented through subsequent operations, has prompted extensive organizational restructuring, administrative revisions and other policy changes within the Organization. Publication of this report at the present time has thus provided the opportunity to reflect on the lessons of UNTAC and reactions to the problems identified therein, thereby resulting in a more thorough and comprehensive review than could have been presented in the immediate aftermath of the mission.

2. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in paragraph 19 of its report on the financing and liquidation of UNTAC (A/49/867), subsequently requested the inclusion in the present report of information on losses, through any means, of assets of peacekeeping operations that have occurred in the last three years. It is the intention of the Secretary-General to submit a separate report on that issue and on related measures taken by the Secretariat. The present report therefore focuses on the principal issues encountered in the administration and management of UNTAC, as well as on the lessons learned from the UNTAC experience, which are incorporated throughout.

3. UNTAC was established by the United Nations to implement the Paris Agreement on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict, central to which was the preparation and conduct of free and fair general elections for a constituent assembly in Cambodia. UNTAC was therefore designed in such a way as to establish the organizational elements required to ensure a neutral political environment conducive to the conduct of the elections, and included seven components with the following responsibilities: (a) organization and conduct of free and fair general elections; (b) stabilization of the security situation and confidence-building through the regrouping, cantonment and demobilization of the forces of the four factions; (c) promotion and protection of human rights; (d) supervision and control of the administrative structures of the country until the establishment of a new government; (e) maintenance of law and order through supervision of the civilian police of the four factions; (f) repatriation and resettlement of refugees and displaced persons; and (g) initiation of the process of rehabilitation.

4. From November 1991 to March 1992, UNTAC was preceded by the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC), the establishment of which marked the start of a transitional period following the Paris Agreement. The presence of UNAMIC in Cambodia helped to preserve the momentum of the peace process, though it can be argued that it was less successful at laying the groundwork for the enormous mission that followed. The UNTAC mandate, which commenced in March 1992, was for a period not to exceed 18 months, with elections to be held no later than May 1993.

II. Evaluation of the administration and management of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia

A. Overview

5. Although it was clear that the Organization required much more extensive planning, preparation and mobilization of resources before launching an operation of the size and scope of UNTAC, the decision was taken nevertheless to proceed in order to sustain the fragile peace process in Cambodia. This fact, together with the many others detailed below, had a considerable impact on how UNTAC was eventually managed and administered.

6. Of the more significant factors affecting the operation, two conditions specified in the Secretary-General's implementation plan (S/23613) as essential to the success of UNTAC were not met from the inception of the mission: the full cooperation of the Cambodian parties; and the freedom of movement of UNTAC personnel. While this had a great impact on the ability of the mission to deploy and to perform the full range of functions foreseen in its concept of operations, UNTAC was able to overcome these constraints.

7. The initial deployment of troops was designed to facilitate the cantonment, disarmament and demobilization process, as mandated by the Security Council. Troops were stationed throughout the country, with emphasis on those areas that had been most affected by the civil war. However, as a result of the refusal of the Party of Democratic Kampuchea (PDK) to honour its obligations under the Paris Agreement, UNTAC was not able to deploy into the areas under its control, and the disarmament and demobilization of the forces could not proceed as planned. By early 1993, despite the continued lack of cooperation on the part of PDK, as well as security transgressions by other parties, UNTAC redeployed its troops in such a way as to provide security for the electoral process. Accommodation and other facilities had to be relocated, and plans for infrastructure and logistic support had to be adjusted. In addition, although it was planned that 50 per cent of the troops would be repatriated following the completion of the demobilization process and the voter registration campaign, with a further reduction to take place immediately following the elections, the security considerations prompted by the non-cooperation of PDK required the retention of all military personnel until months after the elections, as well as the deployment of additional air support and other capabilities both shortly before and during their conduct.

8. Similarly, while it had been expected that the freedom of movement and communications of UNTAC personnel would be seriously affected by the devastated condition of Cambodia's limited infrastructure, movement was further restricted to a significant extent by the warring factions. Similar restrictions were imposed by the millions of landmines and frequent violations of the ceasefire, as well as banditry in the countryside, conditions that prevailed throughout the deployment of UNTAC.

9. In analysing the successes and failures of UNTAC, it is also imperative to take into account the magnitude and complexity of the mandated tasks and the limited time-frame within which they were to be accomplished. With only seven months before the start of the monsoon rains, and in the face of considerable obstacles, a huge and complex mission had to be organized, established and made operational from the ground up. The mission's organizational structure and chain of command had to be developed, and a multinational operation consisting of more than 22,000 troops, military observers, civilian police and civilian personnel had to be mobilized, recruited, deployed and accommodated in Cambodia. In addition, large numbers of local Cambodian personnel, including over 50,000 Cambodian electoral personnel, over 1,000 interpreters and hundreds of drivers, had to be recruited and trained, and dozens of offices had to be established throughout the country. Support systems for the communications, transport, supply, engineering and medical needs of these personnel had to be organized and put in place, requiring, *inter alia*, the procurement, importation, distribution and construction of hundreds of prefabricated buildings, provision and maintenance of thousands of vehicles, generators and computers, installation and maintenance of water purification systems and a large amount of other necessary equipment. Last, but by no means least, the timely availability of food, fuel, potable water, medicines and other required supplies had to be ensured.

10. The timetable for establishing operations was further constricted as a result of the delayed deployment of both military and civilian personnel to the mission. At the end of April 1992, the total number of troops deployed in Cambodia was 3,686 out of the projected 15,900 (23 per cent of the total), 176 out of 3,600 civilian police monitors (less than 5 per cent) and 172 out of 1,227 authorized international civilian personnel (14 per cent). Although significant deployments of military personnel followed mid-year, it was only towards the end of 1992 that full deployment was more or less achieved, by which time the registration of voters was nearly complete. In fact, it was only five months before the elections that UNTAC was able to reach full military strength, while the international civilian staffing never reached more than 85 per cent of the authorized level (see annexes I to VIII).

11. Standard military practice dictates the placement of military support elements such as logistics and engineering elements in advance of the arrival of infantry battalions. This is especially important in the

context of a peacekeeping mission, where such elements are provided by different Member States, and none of the battalions is self-sufficient beyond a brief period upon arrival. Thus, the delays in deployment to UNTAC, in particular the logistics and engineering support elements (see annexes IV and V), had serious implications in terms of the military's operational effectiveness, as well as in terms of a diminished level of support to the entire mission. On the civilian side, the cumulative effects of delayed arrival and insufficient numbers of qualified personnel during the start-up and mid-phase of the operation seriously affected the mission throughout its existence, particularly in the area of administrative support, where monitoring and control functions suffered in favour of more urgent operational requirements (see annexes VII and VIII).

12. The magnitude and complexity of the tasks to be accomplished by UNTAC are vividly illustrated by the constraints that faced the mission: non-compliance or non-cooperation by one or more of the Parties to the Agreement; the debilitated state of the local infrastructure; the requirement to accomplish diverse and highly complex activities within a very limited period of time; the dangers imposed by hostile attacks, landmines, banditry, adverse climatic conditions and diseases; inadequate time and information for satisfactory planning for the mission; concurrent and competing demands for support and staff from other missions, especially the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) (February 1992) and the United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II) (March 1993); and time-consuming start-up procedures, particularly for procurement and the recruitment of staff. Nevertheless, despite these tremendous difficulties, more than 360,000 refugees were repatriated, the electoral legislation was completed and promulgated, some 4.6 million voters were registered, representing nearly 100 per cent of those estimated as eligible, and, in May 1993, 4.2 million Cambodians cast their ballots, expressing their will in a democratic election. In judging the performance of UNTAC, it is essential not to lose sight of this fitting climax to a costly international effort.

B. Planning

13. Reliable mission planning requires not only adequate human and financial resources, but also availability of and access to the necessary information, as well as a reasonable timetable for its collection and analysis. The efficient, well-timed implementation of an operational plan can only be carried out if, *inter alia*, the related planning assumptions have been formulated on the basis of accurate and comprehensive data.

14. Advance planning for UNTAC was inadequate, despite the dispatch of several fact-finding missions to investigate local conditions in Cambodia while the peace process was still in its early stages. The need to coordinate with the four parties to the conflict, which were widely separated both politically and physically, and the complications caused by the shattered or non-existent infrastructure of the country, resulted in information that could be considered neither comprehensive nor fully reliable. As indications of improving political dialogue increased, an Intra-Secretariat Task Force on Cambodia was established in February 1990 to review likely scenarios and potential roles of the Organization in an eventual peacekeeping mission. Notwithstanding these efforts, much of the information required remained unavailable or not forthcoming from the Cambodian factions through the time of the adoption of the Paris Agreement in October 1991, and the mission implementation plan (S/23613) had to be formulated in February 1992 on the basis of the limited information available. In proposing the plan, the Secretary-General made it clear that the information obtained could not be regarded as complete and therefore the assessments regarding priorities and deployment would be subject to change.

15. UNAMIC was established shortly after the signing of the Paris Agreement, and comprised civilian and military liaison staff, a military mine-awareness unit, logistics and support personnel, and later a mine-clearing programme. However, the only planning facility within UNAMIC was dedicated to planning for the electoral process. It took eight months of concentrated work by the election planning team to complete the compilation of a statistical report on which the plans for voter registration and subsequent polling were finalized. There is no doubt that the careful planning of the electoral process, based on experience from previous electoral missions, particularly the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia, and painstaking collection of local information in Cambodia, was fundamental to

the successful organization of the elections. Similarly, the accomplishments of the repatriation component were largely owed to the cumulative knowledge of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the specific experience gained from the long presence of the United Nations Border Relief Operation (UNBRO, later subsumed under UNHCR) on the Thai-Cambodian border, providing humanitarian assistance to the very refugees and displaced persons that were to be repatriated and resettled. The rest of the mission did not have the benefit of such experience, institutional memory or detailed planning activity.

16. The experience in UNTAC showed that the mission would have benefited from the early establishment of a serious planning capability as part of the advance mission's terms of reference. In order to rectify this situation for the future, guidelines have been developed for the collection of information and development of comprehensive concepts of operations at the stage of the advance technical survey mission, which process has also been strengthened by incorporating a broader range of functional specialists. Furthermore, efforts are being made to identify the key support personnel for a mission at an early enough stage to enable them to participate in the advance surveys and the development of the mission's implementation plan, the execution of which will then become their responsibility. It must be recognized, however, that in the context of UNTAC, even had a comprehensive and perfectly accurate operational plan existed, the prevailing conditions still would have hindered the timely provision of administrative and logistical support. It was well understood far in advance of the deployment of the mission that the budget approval process and procurement procedures in place at the time could not accommodate implementation within the known time constraints. In this respect the UNTAC experience was especially useful in underlining the policy and procedural adaptations that would be required more effectively to prepare the Organization to undertake further peacekeeping operations.

C. Coordination

17. A large, complex field operation such as UNTAC demands the systematic coordination of efforts at many levels, including those within the mission and those between the mission and responsible offices at Headquarters and other organizational entities. A clear understanding of the mandate of the mission is essential on all sides, and all concerned need to keep in mind the interdependent nature of the various programmes and activities involved in reaching the common goals. All of these relationships are affected by the availability of resources and professional expertise.

18. During the early stages of UNTAC, the units at Headquarters responsible for supporting peacekeeping missions were located in several offices and departments. In the context of the overall restructuring of the Secretariat, some of those organizational elements were consolidated in 1992 to form the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. In view of the close functional relationship between the Department and the Field Operations Division, the latter was transferred from the Department of Administration and Management to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in 1993, becoming the Field Administration and Logistics Division. The result was a more cohesive structure, better equipped to respond to exigencies in the field during a period of considerable expansion of peacekeeping activities.

19. At UNTAC headquarters in Phnom Penh, overall coordination within the mission was achieved through daily senior staff meetings attended by the heads of components and conducted by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. Special inter-component meetings were also regularly convened to address coordinated support of common programme goals. It was extremely useful, in this regard, that the mission structure incorporated a strong management and coordination function in the designation of a Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General. Systematic coordination at the provincial level, however, proved to be more difficult.

20. Experience has shown that the inherent complexity of centrally managing a large number of organizational entities, dispersed throughout a wide geographical area (which would apply to many or all of the UNTAC components), requires a well-defined institutional framework in which the links between the various components in the area as well as those to the mission headquarters are clearly established. The

organizational structure of UNTAC included 21 provincial/municipal centres, some 176 districts, 23 checkpoints at the borders, ports, and airports, liaison offices in Thailand, Laos and Viet Nam, as well as the headquarters in Phnom Penh. The various components were each represented at some level in most UNTAC locations within Cambodia. This large number of offices, combined with what were often serious limitations on freedom of movement and communications, called for the highest possible level of decentralization of activities and administrative authority. Although this requirement was recognized by UNTAC, the lack of sufficient qualified civilian personnel precluded the institution of a fully effective decentralized structure.

21. As a stopgap measure, Field Service Assistants were assigned to administrative functions in each of the provincial/municipal centres. This arrangement improved the overall coordination of administrative support, and subsequent mission budgets have included provision for the assignment of regional coordinators/field administrative officers at an early stage of an operation. By delegating the authority to take timely decisions on matters routine to the regions, the efficient and cost-effective utilization of resources and the coordination of the needs of various components is enhanced. The identification of sufficient numbers of qualified staff to fill these positions on short notice, however, remains a problem.

22. Another vital aspect of coordination in UNTAC was the relationship between the military and civilian components. The working relationship between UNTAC components, particularly between the military and civilian elements, could have benefited from the early introduction of a clearly formulated institutional framework for cooperative efforts. The implementation plan had envisaged the institution of an Integrated Support Service in the UNTAC Division of Administration, designed to consolidate logistic and support services under one organization so as to respond to mission priorities as they arose and to provide mission-wide coordination. Such a service would have consolidated the supply and support systems of the civilian and military components, including movements, engineering and buildings management services, communications, logistics, field service administration, security and transport. However, the delays in deployment of all categories of personnel to UNTAC, including the military support elements, precluded the early establishment of such a service. As a result, the military component was required to remain self-sufficient longer than anticipated, and when the military support elements arrived, their priority focus not unexpectedly was on military requirements.

23. A telling illustration of this situation was in the area of communications, where the military Force Communications Unit was introduced prior to the delineation of an integrated structure, and therefore developed its communications system independently of the broader mission requirements. The inherent duplication of effort and the incompatibility of parts of the system became a critical issue immediately prior to the elections, as the overall system had become increasingly congested and unresponsive. A coordinated emergency team was able effectively to reconfigure the network structure and allocation of frequencies, as well as reprogramme the diverse equipment as required for fully integrated operations during the crucial election period. The need for this enormous effort could have been prevented by the early introduction of a clearly defined, coordinated communications structure at the outset of the mission had the necessary personnel been available.

24. Following this experience in UNTAC, efforts were made to establish integrated support structures as a matter of priority in subsequent missions, including the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ), UNPROFOR, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR), the United Nations Angola Verification Mission III (UNAVEM III) and the United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH). The introduction and continuing refinement of these organizational structures has minimized many of the difficulties in coordination and support activities experienced in UNTAC and earlier missions. In addition, the concept of an integrated support structure has been included in the draft Operation Support Manual. Unfortunately, while the consequences of not providing the personnel necessary to set up such a structure from the outset have been amply demonstrated, so also have the constraints facing the Organization in its efforts to provide the necessary staff.

D. Administrative Services

1. Human resources

25. A fundamental requirement of any peacekeeping mission is competent, committed and experienced personnel. The more immediate staffing needs must be identified at the outset, including a core of key personnel with managerial and organizational skills and experience who are capable of working under extreme pressure in what are often difficult field conditions. However, because of the expansion of peacekeeping activities since 1991, and compounded by recent retrenchment exercises, the Secretariat does not always have the capacity to assign the required personnel to peacekeeping missions from within the Organization (including the various offices and related agencies within the United Nations common system) without jeopardizing other mandated activities, particularly when large numbers of staff are required in a very brief time-frame.

26. The difficulty in identifying qualified staff was exacerbated in the case of UNTAC by the broad range of unique requirements in terms of skills and experience, and the large numbers of such personnel who needed to be identified and assigned within an extremely limited period of time. For example, the civil administration component required some 150 international specialists to supervise and monitor the Defence, Foreign Affairs, Finance, Public Security and Information Ministries of the administrative structure of Cambodia. Such numbers of experienced staff with the requisite qualifications were simply not available within the Organization.

27. At the same time, the Organization's established recruitment procedures, which were developed for use in a stable, Headquarters context, proved to be far too time-consuming and labour-intensive to meet the needs of a mission of the size of UNTAC under such time constraints. In addition, neither the Office of Human Resources Management nor the then Field Operations Division at Headquarters had sufficient staff to process the necessary recruitment actions. In assembling the staff for UNTAC, it was therefore necessary to identify alternative sources of qualified personnel from outside of the United Nations common system, including regional professional markets, a roster of retirees, United Nations volunteers and civilian personnel on loan from Governments, an approach that was encouraged by Member States. Contractual services were also used by UNTAC in the technical areas, such as construction projects and maintenance of vehicles, generators and communications equipment.

28. An alternative source of personnel that proved to be particularly effective in UNTAC was the United Nations Volunteers Programme. Initially, United Nations volunteers were assigned to the electoral component, where they constituted the overall majority of the international electoral staff and the sole staff, along with United Nations civilian police elements, in the district-level operations. Later, some volunteers were also assigned to perform support functions in the areas of logistics, transport, administration and medical services. The success of this recruitment effort was brought about by a cooperative effort between UNTAC and United Nations Volunteers headquarters at Geneva, with UNTAC providing job descriptions but not otherwise becoming involved in the selection process, and United Nations Volunteers at Geneva activating its worldwide network and compressing its recruitment and training procedures to meet the requirements of the mission. It should be noted, however, that the experience in UNTAC indicated that the usefulness of United Nations volunteers is enhanced when they work closely with United Nations staff members, especially when their functions require assignment in remote, high-risk areas. Nonetheless, the employment of volunteers proved to be a highly practical and cost-effective means of providing essential staff for the mission. Since UNTAC, United Nations volunteers have been used to varying degrees in most peacekeeping operations, and a Global Memorandum of Understanding between the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Volunteer Programme to systematize the participation of United Nations volunteers in future peacekeeping operations is currently being finalized.

29. Given the limited availability of qualified personnel and the above-noted difficulties encountered in recruitment for UNTAC, fewer than 25 per cent of the officially authorized staff had arrived in the mission nearly three months after its establishment (see annex VII), and only 50 per cent had arrived

within the first six months of operations. By the mid-point of the mission, only 75 per cent of the authorized international staff were in the mission area, and that percentage rose to about 85 per cent only at the highest point. A major consequence of the delayed arrival of essential personnel was the steady accumulation of tasks that had to be deferred or, in some cases, neglected entirely in favour of more pressing priorities. Thus, many of the negative consequences of late or slow deployment and lack of qualified personnel in adequate numbers during the start-up and mid-phase were felt through the entire mission and indeed beyond, as liquidation tasks were complicated by lack of accurate records.

30. The need to field such large numbers of personnel within the highly restricted time-frame also resulted in some inefficiencies in selection. For example, although basic requirements were stipulated in soliciting personnel from the diverse sources, including Member States, some personnel arrived in the mission who spoke neither English nor French, which were the working languages of the mission. This was particularly problematic for the civilian police, for which demand in peacekeeping operations consistently exceeds the available supply. Efforts have since been made to emphasize to Member States the importance of providing personnel who meet the requisite qualifications. In cases where government-provided personnel prove to be unqualified, their immediate repatriation and replacement is arranged at the cost of the contributing Government. This provision is now clearly specified to Member States in the "Guidelines for the Deployment, Transfer, Rotation and Extension of United Nations Military Observers and Civilian Police Monitors", distributed in 1995.

31. To address the difficulties experienced in deploying qualified civilian police personnel, a pilot project was recently undertaken to dispatch Selection Assistance Teams to Member States that were to provide large numbers of civilian police to the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES) and the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina/International Police Task Force (UNMIBH/IPTF). The teams assisted the Governments concerned in screening the driving and language skills of the selected civilian police, and a substantial number of unsuitable candidates were removed from the list prior to their deployment to the missions. As a further measure, a number of regional workshops are planned for representatives of Member States responsible for the selection of military observers and civilian police for peacekeeping mission assignments, in order to familiarize them more effectively with the training and qualifications criteria established by the Organization. These arrangements are facilitating the deployment of the most qualified personnel and make it possible to avert the associated costs and loss of operational effectiveness that have, in the past, resulted from the assignment of unqualified individuals or their early repatriation.

32. The local staffing requirements of UNTAC also presented enormous difficulties for the mission, particularly in recruiting and training the numbers required for monitoring the electoral process. The election plan called for the phased placement of nearly 60,000 local United Nations polling officers throughout the country, starting just six months after the establishment of the mission. Meanwhile, recruitment of more than 5,000 regular local staff for the mission was proceeding slowly, given the constraints of the limited number of available administrative personnel to conduct the process, not to mention the rather limited pool of qualified individuals in Cambodia after the disruptions of the previous decade. Efforts to recruit local staff began during the UNAMIC period, with considerable attention being paid to the displaced population under United Nations care at the Thai border. Given their long association with the programmes of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, the displaced-persons camps were a good source of relatively educated English- and French-speaking Cambodians early in the recruitment process, prior to their repatriation. Recruitment and training of the core local staff continued even as the emphasis shifted to the massive requirements for the election period. Nonetheless, the mission succeeded in recruiting, training and deploying more than 49,500 local polling officers (or 83 per cent of the authorized number) in time for the elections in May 1993.

33. A further challenge faced by the Organization in establishing UNTAC was the identification of possible troop-contributing Governments, including those willing to provide civilian police officers. Of 54 Member States attending the first meeting of possible troop contributors, 32 were ultimately in a position to send troops to Cambodia. The final pre-deployment meeting was held in April 1992, just one month prior to the scheduled deployment of about 16,000 troops, with the list of countries contributing support elements (logistics, medical, postal, movement control and engineers) still under discussion. Indeed, as referred to

above, the result was that most infantry battalions were deployed before the engineering units, and the logistics battalion and medical elements were not fully operational until mid-September 1992. The civilian police component, which was to be deployed prior to the commencement of the registration process in October 1992, reached its full strength of 3,600 only in early 1993 (see annex VI). The implications of these delays, coupled with the difficulties of reception and deployment within the country, were significant.

34. The deployment delays experienced in UNTAC highlighted the need for a functioning system of stand-by arrangements, as introduced in the Secretary-General's "Agenda for Peace", whereby Member States would agree to provide certain numbers and types of troops and equipment to a peacekeeping operation on short notice. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has since devoted a great deal of energy to negotiating such arrangements with Member States, and has achieved considerable success in organizing, in principle, coverage of the primary troop requirements for a rapid deployment. Continuing refinements in the specifications of the various requirements and their component functions have also enabled broader participation of Member States with varying capabilities in these arrangements. Nevertheless, it must be stressed that the effectiveness of any stand-by arrangements is wholly dependent upon the willingness of the participants to act when called upon.

35. UNTAC staff in all categories could have benefited from a more structured and rigorous induction and orientation programme upon arrival in the mission area. In cases where Governments provided training prior to deployment, performance was enhanced considerably. Some training was organized in Cambodia, particularly for civilian police. However, the mission's compressed timetable could not sustain any intensive on-the-job training for a large number of personnel. While the ideal situation would be for staff to receive training prior to deployment, this has not proved to be realistic given the requirement for personnel to be deployed to the field as rapidly as possible. Most missions now provide some sort of induction and training to all categories of personnel upon arrival, usually including a brief history of the conflict and mandate of the mission, an introduction to local conditions and culture, and mine-awareness training, and this has proved to be well worth the effort and time invested. However, staff must have the minimum skills and knowledge prior to deployment, particularly with respect to standard computer applications (see paras. 46 and 47 below).

36. As part of the ongoing process of improving the capacity of the United Nations for peacekeeping, the Secretariat has developed standard curricula for training personnel for peacekeeping and has issued a training manual for military personnel to Member States. Similarly, the procedures and practices of United Nations operations have been compiled in handbook forms for civilian police monitors and military observers, as have curricula and standard procedures for training, and these have recently been distributed to the existing peacekeeping missions and Member States for reference and use. A growing number of Member States now have national training programmes. A useful study has been carried out by the Secretariat to assess the state of current training programmes to identify means of strengthening them, including alternative ways to ensure that military and civilian personnel are given the specialized preparation required for missions (A/48/403, paras. 23 and 24).

37. One of the most successful innovations of UNTAC in terms of human resources was the establishment of a community relations office to deal with the interface between UNTAC and the local population. All missions, but particularly large, multi-dimensional operations, would benefit from this type of initiative.

38. Experience in UNTAC also clearly confirmed the importance of continuity in function for all personnel. In the case of military staff officers and civilian police, with the exception of the component heads, these personnel were regularly rotated out of the mission area every six months and replaced in accordance with established practice. Civilian personnel are also usually given, at least initially, assignments for a period of six months. This loss of institutional memory and experience in the specific mission affects not only the performance of assigned functions but also makes it difficult to assign accountability, which is especially important where support services are concerned. If assignments for longer periods, ideally for the entire duration of a mission are not acceptable to contributing Governments, then partial or staggered rotations could be a partial solution and would certainly solve some of the problems. In the case of civilian staff, serious consideration should be given to securing a commitment on the part of key personnel and their releasing departments, where appropriate, to remain for the entire duration of the mission of perhaps

two years as a minimum. If change is unavoidable, measures to alleviate the situation could include ensuring adequate hand-over periods as well, so that sufficient institutional memory is retained with other staff.

39. As the experience of UNTAC and other missions has proved, human resources management in peacekeeping operations, especially in large-scale operations, will always have an ad hoc element, as an unavoidable consequence of dependency on participating States. The constantly changing mandates of some peacekeeping missions makes it extremely difficult to plan and manage the human resources requirements effectively.

40. Over the course of several years following UNTAC and in light of the experience gained, the Secretariat has been vigorously pursuing measures to resolve outstanding issues and to overcome the many problems encountered by UNTAC and other missions in attracting and retaining highly qualified, experienced and motivated personnel, particularly in those areas falling under the purview of the Secretary-General. This also involves, *inter alia*, improved planning, including the ongoing development of mission (personnel) templates to serve as baseline planning, development of new legal and contractual arrangements and the policy framework, diversification of sources of mission personnel, development of various databases to facilitate establishment of rosters in coordination with other Secretariat units and organizations of the United Nations common system, streamlining of recruitment and medical clearance and improvement of training.

41. Staff members assigned from established United Nations offices had constituted the majority of international civilian personnel of UNTAC, and are prominently represented in other peacekeeping missions. The international civilian staff perform core functions defined as the political direction and the administration in all their facets, as well as support functions in the Professional, Field Service and General Service and related categories. They have the undeniable advantages of continuity and experience in the United Nations setting, including familiarity with the Organization's policies and practices. The Secretariat has focused its efforts on improving the situation with regard to the release and detail of highly competent staff to peacekeeping operations. A new policy framework has been set up to strike a difficult balance between the needs of releasing departments required to cope with an increasing workload with dwindling resources and those of peacekeeping operations, while encouraging staff to serve on missions. Such a policy framework is set forth in a bulletin of the Secretary-General and a series of administrative issuances from the Office of Human Resources Management dealing with staffing of peacekeeping missions and assignment and return from mission detail.

42. Another measure to improve the Organization's capacity to deploy and administer staff for the field missions was the revision and reissue in 1994 of the 300 series of the Staff Rules, to minimize administrative delays in the recruitment of personnel for appointments to missions of a limited duration, at all levels (Professional, Field Service and General Service) (A/48/945, para. 49). These rules simplify and streamline the administration of entitlements of civilian mission-appointed staff, reducing the administrative workload in the mission, as well as the need to refer questions or decisions on entitlements to Headquarters, which has since proven particularly useful in missions with substantial civilian personnel components.

43. While over the last few years the pool of effective management personnel for existing and future missions may have become more extensive, it would be unrealistic to expect that these same personnel will always be available, either at short notice or for long periods, for mission assignments. It is therefore incumbent on the Secretariat to ensure the most rational and effective use of the limited number of qualified and experienced staff available. As such, efforts are made to ensure that available staff are in the mission and position where their services are most needed and will be most useful. For example, when setting up a new mission, a chief administrative officer or key service chiefs may need to be transferred from a mission that is already established and running relatively smoothly, to the new operation. While this may, at times, be detrimental to the ideal of continuity in function, the situation confronting the Organization demands that, occasionally, trade-offs do have to be made.

2. Budget and finance

44. The budgetary and financial problems associated with peacekeeping operations are well documented and have been discussed extensively in various forums both within the Secretariat and at the legislative level. UNTAC provided clear examples of the difficulties faced in mission implementation of multi-faceted operations when constrained by financial practices developed for earlier, relatively small-scale operations. Major issues, including the need for advance spending authority, the cumbersome budget cycle that resulted in systemic delays in the appropriation of adequate funding, related requirements for performance reports before the end of the reporting period when information was not yet available, and the level of unpaid assessed contributions resulting in consistent delays in reimbursements to troop-contributing countries, have been raised and addressed in the aftermath of UNTAC in various reports and resolutions (A/48/403-S/26450, A/48/945, A/49/664 and addenda and General Assembly resolution 49/233). In the context of the present report therefore only the more specific administrative constraints affecting UNTAC will be discussed.

45. Overall financial responsibility in UNTAC was exercised by the Director of Administration. As was the case in other areas, the most serious problems faced were related to the lack of sufficient numbers of qualified staff. This deficiency was critical for UNTAC because of the size of the operation and the complexity of its budget, compounded by problems with the introduction and implementation of three new computerized finance systems, namely Sun Accounts, Sun Business and Progen. The Finance Section's inability to handle fully the initial workload, owing to staff shortages and lack of training in the newly introduced software packages, had repercussions throughout the duration of the mission. Available staff resources in the early stages of the mission were necessarily devoted to the most pressing requirements, with the result that record keeping was often incomplete or poorly maintained, and accountability was compromised. The persistent staff shortage also necessitated a greater reliance on the Field Administration and Logistics Division, Department of Peacekeeping Operations, at Headquarters for such important tasks as the preparation of budgets and performance reports, activities that would, under other circumstances, be handled mostly in the field. Only relatively late in the mission was the situation improved, with the arrival of qualified staff in the necessary numbers to address more adequately the current requirements, as well as rectification of past discrepancies.

46. The UNTAC Finance Section also experienced a number of difficulties unique to the situation in Cambodia, such as the complete absence of viable banking facilities outside Phnom Penh. This had enormous implications for the payroll, with tens of thousands of local personnel countrywide whose salaries had to be paid in cash. While presenting additional logistics and security problems for the mission, procedures were implemented whereby the necessary cash transfers and disbursements were effected without losses. In this respect, it is very much to the credit of the UNTAC Finance Section that it was able to organize and execute flawlessly the one-time payment of some 50,000 polling officers following the elections, which entailed the transfer and disbursement of $10.7 million in cash at 150 locations countrywide.

47. The numerous imprest petty cash funds that had to be established for each of the offices and sub-offices throughout the country also necessitated substantial monitoring and accounting tasks, particularly in that the staff members responsible for those funds in the absence of sufficient experienced staff, were in many instances Field Service Assistants without full financial qualifications, or even United Nations volunteers or military officers in a few cases. Insofar as operations in the field required financial support regardless of the administrative staffing situation, the mission had to apply the greatest possible flexibility, mindful of the relevant rules and regulations. The deployment of experienced finance assistants as they became available alleviated some of the problems encountered in the administration and recording of those imprest/petty cash funds. Some of the problems encountered could have been prevented by the establishment of a mobile finance team to provide on-site assistance. However, that proposal was put forward only during the later stages of the mission. Record keeping was further complicated by difficulties with the new computerized finance systems, most critically in the provincial offices, as a result of which records often required complete reconstruction in the Finance Section in Phnom Penh so as to be compatible with the newly implemented central accounting system.

48. It was clear from the outset that an automated payroll and accounting system would be essential for a mission the size of UNTAC. As the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) was not yet available for use, other alternatives were investigated as stopgap systems to support the mission. Commercial packages were selected that would be immediately usable without substantial technical adjustments to adapt to the particular needs of the mission. The Sun Accounts, Sun Business and Progen software initially installed became the first computerized accounting systems utilized by peacekeeping missions, and proved to be very useful in that context, albeit necessitating some adaptation of existing procedures. Training, however, became critical for the mission, both in the new systems and in the new procedures for utilizing the software, since most staff members were not yet trained in the new systems. As neither the finance nor electronic data-processing staff of the mission had any prior training in the use or support of this software, the mission was compelled to rely on periodic support from Headquarters in both training and maintenance of the system, which could not always be accommodated in a timely manner. Without knowledgeable support staff available on site and versed in the three newly implemented computer systems, many problems were compounded and had the potential to disrupt the entire system, as indeed happened for more than a month in early 1993 until a Headquarters team could be sent to the field to address the problem. Throughout the functioning of the mission, the training issue persisted, owing to the continued late deployment of finance personnel to the mission, since the existing staff was not sufficiently trained to assist or train other users adequately in more than a peremptory fashion and were also preoccupied with their demanding duties. The obvious results were the loss of valuable staff time while staff members were learning the systems through trial and error, providing remedial assistance to new users, and additional workload arising from the need to re-check all inputs and calculations and correct technical errors. Furthermore, these disruptions, coupled with the general shortage of personnel experienced and trained in the newly implemented computerized system, prevented the budget and finance staff from devoting appropriate attention to the timely review of unliquidated obligations and bank reconciliations, and seriously hindered their ability to prepare meaningful budget estimates and performance reports. While most of those problems were eventually addressed through experience and the deployment of the required staff, the corrective actions necessitated substantial additional work.

49. Since UNTAC, the computerized systems for finance and budgeting, as well as the personnel administration and procurement systems, have been emplaced from the very outset of new mission deployment, and efforts are being made to provide prior training in the relevant systems to all international staff assigned to those functions. Before deployment, all computer hardware is installed with the necessary mission software, and the senior staff are provided with laptop computers also installed with the relevant software following their training, to ensure that they will arrive in the mission area with the tools and training they require to perform their functions immediately. Similarly, the electronic data-processing staff assigned to each mission are fully trained in the support of all systems in use by the mission prior to deployment, so that any problems that arise can be addressed or further training assistance provided locally within the mission. Of course, as the number of missions has grown, and lately begun to subside, the experience gained by staff at all levels in the use of these now standard computerized systems has resulted in a much larger pool of qualified staff from which to draw for mission assignments.

50. The introduction of standard computerized systems for finance, personnel and procurement, in addition to streamlining the work and ensuring greater accuracy, has had significant impact on the internal controls available to the mission. While the systems currently in use by the missions are not fully integrated (though it is envisioned that the eventual implementation of IMIS in the missions will provide such integration), missions do have the capability with the existing systems to provide comparison reports of the data through which they can identify any discrepancies and make immediate corrections. This has obvious advantages, particularly for payroll and accounts payable, where the financial interests of the Organization are at stake. In addition, general familiarity with the standard mission computer systems should enable the Organization's auditors more easily to find clear audit trails and all other relevant information required for complete and timely audit analysis.

51. Certainly, the best assurance of financial accountability and control is to guarantee the deployment of the necessary staff to the budget and finance units of a mission at the earliest stage, in order fully to implement the systems and procedures by which the mission is to function. Given the difficulties

experienced in assigning and deploying qualified staff, the use of "roving finance officers" to provide assistance and support to field missions, particularly at the early stages of the mission, has been developed as a stopgap measure, and is outlined in a recent report of the Secretary-General (A/50/983). Experienced finance officers, either drawn from serving Secretariat staff or on dedicated posts, when available, would be assigned for short durations to meet specific needs of the missions, from planning surveys and mission start-up to training and troubleshooting. Similarly, the concept of "management review officers" (outlined in the same report) addresses the internal control problems of missions by recommending inclusion of a proactive monitoring and procedural analysis capacity in their basic management structure. While these do not address the underlying human resource deployment issues, they should to some extent alleviate the immediate problems of establishing appropriate controls by ensuring that experienced staff are available to missions when required, even temporarily, and with the necessary qualifications and mandate.

3. Procurement and logistics

52. The experience of UNTAC served to highlight shortcomings in the Organization's procurement policies as related to their application in the context of peacekeeping operations. Compounded by the mission's near-total reliance on international procurement stemming from the unique constraints of the local situation in Cambodia, the established procedures and processes for undertaking official purchases (which had been developed for use in a stable Headquarters-type setting) often proved too bureaucratic and time-consuming to meet operational requirements. Some immediate measures were undertaken to address the difficulties experienced in UNTAC, such as greatly increasing the delegation of authority for local procurement, though broader structural solutions must be considered to meet the needs of such large, short-term peacekeeping missions in general.

53. UNTAC was, by any account, a logistical nightmare from the beginning. The infrastructure of the country was virtually non-existent for much of the period of the mission, there was no local production or market from which to supply the mission, and even the alternatives for bringing goods into the country were extremely limited. The mission itself was to be of an extraordinarily large size, having a clearly defined and brief time-frame, with a broad mandate to be carried out on several tracks simultaneously and with severely limited lead time to prepare its deployment. Every basic support need, including accommodation, food, water, electrical power generation and fuel, would need to be brought into the country, and many of the additional requirements could not be anticipated, were difficult to define and changed frequently. Finally, the fragile political situation underlying the establishment of the mission led to disruptions from the outset, as the non-cooperation of one of the parties to the conflict impeded access to sizeable portions of the country and necessitated late revisions to the mission's objectives and concept of operations.

54. Recognizing those obstacles and the tremendous preparations to be undertaken in order to enable deployment of the mission, a substantial advance appropriation ($200 million) was requested for the procurement of accommodation, transportation, communications and other support equipment and services. However, that was not approved by the General Assembly until just two weeks before the start of the mission. Insofar as the Organization's financial rules and regulations prevent procurement until funds are specifically allocated, the delay of this initial appropriation greatly hindered the timely provision of the identified equipment/supply requirements, with repercussions throughout the mission. Furthermore, while the appropriation was intended primarily to support the infrastructural preparations for the mission, a substantial proportion of those funds was utilized for the actual deployment of mission personnel and contingents. The difficulties in providing the essential equipment to establish and support the mission continued with the delays in the preparation of the mission's budgets and related appropriation of funds.

55. As noted above, an early attempt to facilitate procurement for the mission, bearing in mind the scope of requirements and the inherent delays in referring all matters to Headquarters, was to increase the delegated authority of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Cambodia to approve local procurement up to an unprecedented maximum of $500,000. That level of authority, along with the definition of the local procurement area to include major regional commercial centres (Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines, as well as Laos and Viet Nam), afforded the mission

direct access to broader regional markets, with their inherent cost-effectiveness. Though the mission was initially ill-equipped to make full use of that delegation, the eventual strengthening of the procurement section and the establishment in mid-1992 of a satellite procurement office in Singapore to facilitate transactions greatly improved the mission's local procurement capability and accordingly reduced lead times for delivery.

56. As mentioned above, the mission was hampered from the start by the lack of concrete, reliable data for planning purposes. In the area of procurement this implied the absence of detailed requirements and supporting technical specifications, which are prerequisites for any procurement action. Combined with a general lack of experienced personnel, this had a particularly marked impact on the provision of large-scale items to the mission, such as rations, water, fuel and accommodation-related equipment and supplies. Without experienced contract administrators, the mission's ability to monitor closely the performance of contractors was seriously constrained, resulting in recurring problems with quality, quantity and the timely distribution of supplies. For example, when UNTAC was first established, only the most cursory guidance was available for establishing contracts to provide rations to the widely dispersed contingents, based solely on a flat rate per person. With the assistance of a Government-provided military specialist at Headquarters, four regional suppliers were contracted to supply food and water directly to the contingent locations, but numerous problems arose relating to the quality and quantity of rations delivered and associated ethnic and religious requirements. Those were, by necessity, addressed by the respective military units in the first instance, though the larger issues of performance and monitoring of requirements fell to the mission headquarters, which was not sufficiently staffed to provide fully adequate oversight.

57. The Organization has since made significant improvements in the acquisition and distribution of rations, including the promulgation of a revised ration scale that clearly defines entitlements and includes provision for dietary and ethnic requirements, with a maximum ceiling for daily rates in all rations contracts. In addition, model contracts have been developed, which specify delivery points, procedures for substitutions, a mechanism for resolving issues associated with changes in location and numbers of troops to be fed, and monthly reconciliation of invoices.

58. Difficulties were also encountered with control over the distribution of fuel and other petroleum products throughout the country. The lack of experienced personnel and logistical infrastructure early in the mission led to a series of ad hoc arrangements for the provision of those vital supplies. The distribution system was organized by the contractor, who also fabricated and installed some 400 fuel tanks countrywide, including aviation fuel bladders with filtration systems and pumps in all the airfields. Those installations required continual monitoring, control and verification, which was not always possible because of staffing limitations. Bulk purchase of these supplies was instituted in late 1992 only, when appropriate resources were made available and actual needs could be more accurately determined.

59. The shortage of engineering personnel and the undeveloped logistical infrastructure were fully taken into consideration when contracting for the provision of prefabricated accommodation for the mission. Because of the initial estimate that such accommodation would have to be provided for virtually every contingent and component of the mission (in that there were no existing facilities or services available in most of the country), self-contained encampments were ordered from various suppliers, in a number of sizes and configurations for each of the specific users. It should be noted in this context that only a fraction of the original estimated requirements was eventually ordered, because of the inability of vendors to provide the required numbers within the requisite time-frame. The contracts included all components for fully functional buildings, as well as delivery and installation at unspecified end sites throughout the country. However, because of changing operational plans owing to political developments, the identification of the specific sites was in many cases delayed. With this in mind, and following a review of the transport resources available to the mission, most of the contracts were revised while the prefabricated units were in shipment to remove the inland transportation and installation clauses. Though this provided some savings to the Organization, it negated some of the benefits of having the suppliers remain fully responsible for installation and set-up of the units in turnkey condition. Insofar as the logistics of delivering the units to the various locations was difficult and in cases delayed by completion of site preparations, some problems arose with security while the units were awaiting distribution, for which the

Organization was then solely responsible. The experience in this process has led to the adoption of a more modular approach for the provision of prefabricated accommodation units, based on standardized specifications. Using this approach, the missions can determine their specific requirements for any configuration, with installation either by the mission itself or by local contractors, saving both time and costs. And while there is currently little need foreseen to procure prefabricated components, owing to the available surplus of such equipment from recently closed missions, preliminary steps have been undertaken to develop a contingency contract for supply of prefabricated modules should the need arise in future.

60. The enormous amounts of equipment required within a very limited time-frame often meant that a number of suppliers or manufacturers had to be approached, with availability superseding considerations of standard specifications or compatibility. Such was the case to some extent with the prefabricated accommodation units, but more so with the provision of vehicles and electrical generators. With a requirement for a total of some 6,000 vehicles for the mission, no single supplier was able to provide the full requirements for one type of vehicle, and the mission had to procure a variety of makes and models of vehicle. Similarly, the immediate requirement for a large number of generators of various capacities went far beyond the availability from suppliers in the region and the generators were therefore procured globally from different manufacturers regardless of standardized specifications. While that situation was unavoidable, and complicated by the need to take the earliest possible procurement action before reliable estimates of needs could be made, the resulting great diversity led to considerable complications in providing maintenance and maintaining a corresponding stock of spare parts. An attempt to address the problem of vehicle maintenance was made by arranging for vehicle maintenance facilities, including workshops and stocks of spare parts, to be supported by the main vehicle supplier, although that proved inadequate. For the generators, the initial considerable maintenance problems were overcome once the mechanics were familiarized with all of the types and makes. Nevertheless, the Organization gained valuable experience in how to streamline the procurement process to meet field mission conditions. By opening the process to global competition and making allowances to split procurement among bidders for available quantities, the Organization was able to benefit both in the timely provision of the equipment required and the resulting reduced operational costs.

61. Further complicating the procurement difficulties described above were the additional and unforeseen requirements of military units that arrived in Cambodia without the appropriate equipment as specified in the Guidelines for Troop Contributors. Apart from compromising the operational effectiveness of those units and, in turn, the mission as a whole, that created a new category of urgent requirements to add to the workload of the already insufficient procurement staff, and diverted scarce resources, both human and financial, from other equally important tasks. Furthermore, in many of those cases, acquisition of the required items involved a long lead time. That experience prompted the Organization to emphasize more strongly the need for initial self-sufficiency when discussing potential troop contributions with Member States, and to initiate a process whereby United Nations personnel can be sent to assist Member States in assessing the supplies and equipment to be deployed with the military units, and thus to address any deficiencies prior to the departure of the unit concerned. That approach has proved to be successful in deployments to UNPROFOR, UNAMIR and UNAVEM, particularly for contingents coming from Member States that have experienced difficulties in that regard in the past. Similarly, the more detailed specifications of the stand-by arrangements, as noted in paragraph 34 above, should serve to ensure that the contingents so deployed are fully and appropriately equipped.

62. A number of general measures to remedy some of the broad procurement difficulties experienced by UNTAC were outlined in paragraphs 76 to 81 of the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly on effective planning, budgeting and administration of peacekeeping operations (A/48/945). Those included maintenance of a revolving reserve stock of certain basic equipment and supplies in the form of start-up kits to enable new missions to become operational and minimally self-sufficient without undue delay (further detailed in document A/49/936), use of contingency contracting methods to enable more rapid procurement of readily available equipment or supplies, or items that may be subject to frequent technological updates or cost reductions, and the establishment of standard equipment specifications based on actual field requirements to ensure compatibility, efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Recommendations were also made to decentralize procurement responsibility further by increasing the

expenditure ceilings established for local committees on contracts in the field missions and by expanding procurement areas, while maintaining the Central Headquarters procurement system for standardized equipment on a global basis.

63. The experience in UNTAC highlighted the need for better procurement and contract management on the part of the Organization in general, but particularly in respect of field operations. Conditions in the field necessitate greater flexibility in contracting in order to allow revisions to the terms of the contract, within broad parameters, so as to reflect continuing developments in the mission area and mandate. Procurement processes themselves require streamlining in a way that would allow missions to exercise the necessary flexibility, while at the same time ensuring due regard to internal controls. Standard bidding documents and contracts have since been prepared for the field context, including specific provisions for delivery locations, adjustments to quantity or quality, contingencies, enforcement provisions and cancellation clauses for non-performance. However, more active contract management remains essential, including constant monitoring of the continued validity of operational planning parameters and related requirements, as well as contractual performance. Experienced contract administrators are crucial in order to enhance control and responsiveness, as well as to help prevent contractual disputes. However, while every effort is made to deploy such personnel, there is a serious shortage of staff with such experience available for mission assignment.

64. Owing in part to the problems experienced in UNTAC, the Secretary-General initiated a high-level expert review of the procurement process intended to arrive at specific recommendations leading to the establishment of an efficient and responsive procurement process, including procurement for field missions and procurement in the field. Made up of procurement experts provided by various Member States, the review group submitted a report in December 1994, which provided a series of recommendations for immediate actions to derive quick benefits as well as for longer-term improvements. Those recommendations for streamlining the process and procedures supported many of the measures proposed earlier by the Secretary-General (A/45/945), of which most were already being carried out. Subsequent reports of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/49/67 and A/C.5/50/13) provide further details on the progress made to date in the implementation of procurement reform. Nevertheless, while significant improvements have been achieved, the time-consuming procurement process continues to limit the Organization's capability to respond quickly to urgent situations, and further efforts are required.

4. Contingent-owned equipment

65. UNTAC experienced particular difficulties in recording and accounting for contingent-owned equipment brought into the mission by military units. Although reference to the process was included in the relevant Guidelines for Troop Contributors, the Secretariat did not sufficiently stress to Member States the importance of the in- and out-survey process for their equipment accompanying troops into the mission area. Thus, while greater efforts at disseminating that information to troop contributors were made for subsequent operations, several of the UNTAC contingents were not fully aware of the significance of following a proper in-survey process for subsequent reimbursement for use or loss of contingent-owned assets. In some instances, owing to some extent to the compressed deployment schedule and shortage of administrative personnel to oversee the process, no in-survey was prepared at all. The necessary in-survey process was similarly overlooked in many instances where equipment and other supplies were brought into the mission on national resupply flights, further undermining accurate recordkeeping. In addition, while the out-survey process was better organized and generally more effective, serious deficiencies in the documentation supporting the contingents' claims for reimbursement has resulted in a backlog that continues to be addressed today, more than two years after the end of the mission.

66. In addition to the difficulties experienced in the physical verification of the equipment, the established practice of reimbursements based on depreciation of the full value of the equipment over four years was recognized as impractical in the context of operations of a short duration. In UNTAC therefore an ad hoc procedure was instituted, with the agreement of Member States, whereby the annual depreciation paid by the United Nations for contingent-owned equipment was reduced by reflecting a more standard

depreciation schedule. The Secretary-General subsequently proposed a revised procedure for determining appropriate compensation to Member States for contingent-owned equipment (A/48/945), and was authorized by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/233 of 23 December 1994 to proceed with a project wherein Member States would participate in a Working Group on Contingent-Owned Equipment to set comprehensive standards for categories of equipment and establish new rates of reimbursement. The Working Group, made up of technical and financial experts from Member States, met from March to August 1995 and made its recommendations, which were summarized in a report of the Secretary-General (A/50/807) and presented to the General Assembly for approval. The recommendations were endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution 50/222 of 11 April 1996. Implementation of the new procedures began on 1 July 1996, and a report is to be presented detailing the experience of the first full year of implementation.

67. The proposed system is designed to reduce bureaucracy by eliminating lengthy survey procedures, and to improve coordination and efficiency in the management of mission assets in the field for both the civilian and the military components. By providing flexibility in the application of "leasing" or self-sustainment concepts according to established rates, the system should also increase transparency in a simplified planning and budgeting process, improve the reimbursement process and encourage greater participation of Member States in peacekeeping operations.

5. Management of assets

68. Prior to the rapid expansion of peacekeeping operations commencing with UNTAC, the Organization's management of peacekeeping assets had not been an issue of pressing concern. However, the enormous quantity of equipment acquired for UNTAC, as well as for subsequent large missions, left the Organization with a vast inventory of assets. Whereas some surplus assets had previously been transferred between missions or held at the United Nations Supply Depot at Pisa, Italy, the scope of the UNTAC assets to be organized and accounted for far surpassed any previous experience. Oversight and control by the UNTAC administration was complicated by the rapid deployment schedule, the widely dispersed work sites and the tenuous security situation, and, of course, the shortage of personnel. That problem was further magnified as the mission began to draw down, little more than a year after initial deployment, and assets had to be accounted for and prepared for further use or disposal as they became surplus. Without complete records from the beginning of the mission, the liquidation process became even more unwieldy.

69. The effectiveness of property control and inventory functions is, to a very large extent, dependent on the observance of proper procedures for procurement, receiving and inspection, and distribution of assets to the sections and users. Proper reporting and timely investigation of losses of assets is also essential. If there are gaps in the process, they will inevitably reflect on the ability to control, manage and account for assets during and after the mission. The quick establishment of necessary channels of communication and control between the responsible units should be an administrative priority of any mission. As was the case throughout UNTAC, the late organization of administrative functions jeopardized the mission's effectiveness and increased the overall workload.

70. It was also evident in UNTAC that the introduction of stricter measures was required to ensure that staff live up to their responsibilities with respect to their use of United Nations property, as well as to underline the accountability of chiefs of sections and units. When signing for equipment assigned to them, staff are informed of their responsibility to safeguard the equipment and that they may be held financially liable for loss or damage to United Nations property as a result of misconduct or negligence. This is normally a sufficient deterrent to disregard for United Nations property, and staff are periodically reminded of their responsibility through the distribution of administrative issuances.

6. Records management

71. In addition to accurate inventory records, there is an obvious need to establish and maintain well-organized and comprehensive records of the mission's activities in general. With that in mind, a records management unit was successfully established in UNTAC for the first time as an integral part of the mission's administrative structure. Experience has shown the need for uniformity in recordkeeping, particularly in situations such as UNTAC where many offices operate parallel to one another. The UNTAC records management unit was given responsibility for organizing files at each location in accordance with a central plan, periodically monitoring each office to ensure consistency, and later consolidating and indexing the records at mission headquarters. At the end of the mission, the unit was able to coordinate an orderly transfer of all mission records to the central archives and records management unit at Headquarters. Since these records must be properly preserved for administrative, historical and legal purposes well beyond the end of the mission, it is imperative that they be as complete as possible, logically organized and clearly identified, conditions that were met by UNTAC through the assignment of one international staff member and three local staff members to this important function. However, some further consideration should be given with respect to arrangements and policy for the reception, organization and access to mission records once shipped to Headquarters.

72. As the early establishment of appropriate procedures saves time and effort in the long run, greater emphasis has been placed on this in more recent missions. New technologies that make it possible to preserve virtually unlimited amounts of data in minimal storage space are also currently being introduced. In this regard, pending full implementation of the use of electronic storage of records, standard record retention schedules have been prepared to help organize the missions' records management and minimize costly transfers of unnecessary documentation. Following the UNTAC example, the standard mission organizational structure now includes a records management unit, and record management procedures are being promulgated.

7. Review boards

73. In every mission, substantial administrative efforts must be directed to accounting for assets lost or damaged through theft, accidents and other causes, as well as for settling claims by both staff members and third parties for losses or injuries, including death, sustained in the course of the mission's activities. A Local Property Survey Board and a Claims Review Board are routinely established in the missions, which are delegated authority to address those matters locally and to make recommendations to the Headquarters bodies for approval of actions or settlements beyond the delegated limits. In the case of UNTAC, owing to its sheer size, the poor local security situation and the state of the local infrastructure, those Boards were inundated with cases, which added a considerable burden to their members, whose main responsibilities as senior administrative staff regularly had to be set aside to deal with these matters. Because of the relatively low financial limits routinely delegated to missions, that similarly created an enormous workload for Headquarters, as the cases sent for approval had to be processed and reviewed. In order to facilitate the work of the UNTAC boards therefore modifications were introduced to streamline the process, increasing the levels of delegated financial authority for local settlements to both the boards and the Director of Administration. Similar increases in delegated authority have been granted for the missions in the former Yugoslavia for similar reasons, and a review of the issue in general is currently under way within the Secretariat.

8. Boards of inquiry

74. One of the standard procedures in addressing any accident or other incident involving personal injury/death or property damage/loss that involves United Nations personnel has been the convening of a Board of Inquiry to report on the incident to the appropriate officials. In a peacekeeping mission the size of

UNTAC, the work associated with convening boards of inquiry and preparing the related reports can engage a significant number of personnel and demand long hours of work. The UNTAC military and civilian police, in addition to their regular monitoring functions, were responsible for investigating incidents outside Phnom Penh, while the Civilian Security and Safety Section, as far as staff resources would allow, was responsible for those occurring within Phnom Penh. The final investigation reports constituted the basis for the disposition of the cases.

75. One of the difficulties experienced in UNTAC with the handling of boards of inquiry was the lack of sufficient personnel trained to carry out or assist with the necessary investigations. That problem has persisted in some other missions and is all the more serious as investigations need to be conducted as soon as possible after the incident. The problem has been recognized and efforts are being made to ensure the availability of sufficient security staff and military and civilian police to undertake the actual investigations as required. In addition, as the civilian and military police attached to each mission are of necessity assigned a major role in the board of inquiry process beyond the initial investigation stage, it is important to ensure that such functions are clearly included in their terms of reference, so as to avoid misunderstandings or resentment over what can make up a significant portion of their overall workload.

76. The standard operating procedures that guided the work of boards of inquiry in earlier missions were developed in the stable context of long-term operations and, as such, the criteria for investigation and reporting proved to be excessively time-consuming in a mission of the size and nature of UNTAC. The bulk of the approximately 550 cases that required processing by UNTAC boards of inquiry were related to traffic accidents, damage to property and theft. To render the process more meaningful, as well as more manageable, the procedures and criteria were revised with a view to concentrating the mission's limited resources on incidents/accidents of a more serious nature, including those where there was a suspicion of fraud. Those criteria are now being applied in other missions, and should be particularly useful to large missions to expedite the processing of a substantial backlog of pending reports.

E. Technical Services

1. Communications

77. The need for operational self-sufficiency within a peacekeeping mission is most pronounced in the area of communications. Communication facilities of any kind were practically non-existent in Cambodia before UNTAC began. To fulfil its functions, as well as provide security for United Nations personnel and property on the ground, a prerequisite for the full deployment of UNTAC was the establishment of a reliable network to cover both long-distance and extensive local communications between Phnom Penh and many other locations, often in remote areas. As that system would be the only available means of communication in the mission area, provisions had to be made to meet the generic as well as the specialized needs of each mission component, and to enable access to it for both official (military as well as civilian) and private communications by the staff in general.

78. To create that system, over $32 million worth of communications equipment was procured, installed, maintained and secured, including 58 remote very high frequency repeater sites in various parts of the country. Insofar as the Organization did not, at that stage, have the capability to install, maintain and operate such an enormous system independently, additional contracts in excess of $41 million were entered into to provide the necessary technical services. That project eventually involved close to 300 civilian specialists (both United Nations staff and contractors) and some 400 military personnel, with expertise in various communications technologies including satellite, very high frequency portable, mobile and base station radios, high frequency long-distance radio communications for remote areas, a trunking system that linked the UNTAC offices by facsimile, telephone and radio, and international commercial connections. The vastly complex system, the largest ever undertaken by the Organization, was not without its shortcomings, but on the whole it served its purpose. And though the project in Cambodia could not have been carried out without the intensive, and costly, involvement of commercial contractors, the experience

gained was critical to the organizational self-sufficiency achieved for similar, though smaller, projects in subsequent peacekeeping missions, notably UNOSOM, UNAMIR and UNMIH.

79. Since the UNTAC communications system was the only functioning system in the country, mission personnel were allowed access to it for private calls on a reimbursable basis. With the many urgent priorities for scarce staff during the early stages of the mission, it was only later that a unit was established for systematic monitoring and billing for private use of the system. Regular monthly collection from the staff and military was instituted only thereafter, and the successful recovery of approximately $2.5 million in costs incurred for private calls made previously required substantial additional efforts from that unit. Subsequent missions have instituted such procedures in the early stages of the mission, before outstanding balances could build up to such levels, facilitating the recordkeeping and recovery process.

80. The UNTAC Communications Section was also responsible for the installation and maintenance of reproduction equipment and generators. Given that communications technicians were usually the only technically qualified personnel in a mission, that had been the standard practice in peacekeeping operations. UNTAC, however, was not only a very large mission, spread out over a considerable geographical area, but was almost totally reliant on generators for all of its power requirements. Responsibility for the generators would therefore have been more easily and efficiently accomplished by a self-contained unit. In subsequent missions, responsibility for generators has indeed been separated from the communications section, except for very small missions where such a separation would not be feasible or necessary.

2. Transport

81. The Transport Section was responsible for maintaining a vehicle fleet of some 6,000 civilian-pattern vehicles and approximately 4,000 contingent-owned, military-pattern vehicles and equipment. Compounding the immense volume of routine maintenance work, the extremely harsh road conditions in the country and long distances to be covered, not to mention often inexperienced drivers, meant greater than average wear and tear and traffic accidents, and associated supplemental requirements for vehicle servicing, spare parts and supplies. The UNTAC Transport Section, like most other units, started off the mission with neither the required number of staff nor the expertise to cope with a task of that magnitude. As noted in paragraph 58 above, the technical support offered by the major vehicle supplier was never realized to the extent expected. In the absence of that major component of the vehicle maintenance plan, the mission integrated the civilian and military transport operations in order to maximize its resources and coordinate a considerable inventory of supplies and spare parts in Phnom Penh. A few strategically placed workshops were established in the countryside and the situation was further alleviated through the recruitment of United Nations volunteers as vehicle mechanics, enabling the mission to expand maintenance operations with small workshops in each province.

82. With the delays in vehicle delivery and vehicle maintenance problems, vehicle assignments had to be periodically reviewed in order to ensure that priority activities could be carried out. In addition, under some contracts it was stipulated that contractual personnel, such as aircraft crews and construction personnel, should be provided with UNTAC vehicles. That had not been anticipated in the original planning for the mission's vehicle establishment or budget. The Secretariat has taken numerous steps to prevent that situation from recurring. Service contracts now specify that contractors must make their own arrangements for ground transportation, or, if that is not possible, advance notice should be given to the United Nations for those requirements.

3. Air operations

83. Notwithstanding considerable efforts to repair the road infrastructure in Cambodia in order to enable electoral and other teams to travel around the country and to reduce the mission's reliance on aircraft in general, UNTAC was obliged to rely heavily on its air assets. Air operations therefore formed a vital

component of the UNTAC support organization for transportation requirements for personnel, as well as for the delivery of supplies and equipment. In some situations, air transportation was necessary for security reasons, minimizing the risks associated with extended land travel, such as banditry and landmines. In others, air transportation was simply the most expedient and efficient, bearing in mind the time involved in reaching remote areas by road. While crucial to the operational success of the mission, the use of air transportation was extremely costly, and advance planning and control mechanisms were thus extremely important. Although established rather late in the mission, controls were initiated in UNTAC through the creation of a movement control centre with the responsibility to task all air assets.

84. The lack of sufficient, experienced staff was further exacerbated in the case of air operations by the lack of clear standard operating procedures. The military component played a leading role in directing air operations at the early stages of the mission, but experienced staff and better preparation and direction at the Headquarters level would have enabled the civilian component to take proper control from the outset. Greater emphasis is now placed on the preparation and training of air operations staff before deployment to the field, and more detailed policies and guidelines for administration, management and control of air resources have been developed. In addition, it became clear in UNTAC that far greater emphasis had to be placed on air safety. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations therefore strengthened the Headquarters management and support capacity by creating, within the Field Administration and Logistics Division, a distinct Air Safety Unit, and by devoting greater resources to the Air Operations Unit and the Transport Section overall. A specialized air operations officers training course was developed, and during the past two years nearly all such officers selected for mission service have undergone the training prior to deployment. The relevant guidelines and instructions for air operations contained in the draft Field Administration Manual were updated during the UNTAC period, and have since been supplemented by more detailed guidelines in the recently completed draft Operation Support Manual. Lastly, a very specific Air Operations Manual, which is in the early stages of preparation, will clearly describe how air resources are to be utilized for maximum efficiency and effectiveness in support of all mission components, procedures for monitoring performance and contract implementation, verification of block flying hours and invoices for fuel utilization, and all related details of the range of activities falling under air operations.

85. UNTAC air operations also experienced numerous difficulties in connection with contracts for air support, especially monitoring of the performance of the contractors and contract implementation in general. A series of short-term contracts were entered into pending the negotiation and approval of a longer-term contract, and individual negotiations were held at Headquarters with various contractors. That resulted in discrepancies in the terms and requirements, which could not be easily followed by mission staff. Deficiencies in contractor performance were therefore often not recognized, or corrected, until substantially after the fact, and verification of invoices was made more difficult. As a result, the Organization developed a United Nations standard air charter agreement, setting out standardized terms, procedures and performance factors for every aircraft charter, which has greatly simplified monitoring and control by the missions.

4. Buildings management

86. Appropriate buildings and services were generally unavailable in Cambodia, and effective buildings management and engineering services were therefore crucial to the mission. That service was responsible for the renovation, operation and maintenance, and sometimes construction, of a vast array of buildings and camps, ranging from small district offices to a 100-bed hospital, an air passenger building and the mission headquarters complex in Phnom Penh. The service was also responsible for the development and operation of a theatre-wide water purification system, including drilling and equipping 110 wells, upgrading four airfields and repairing 425 bridges and hundreds of kilometres of roads. With the extremely tight deployment schedule and the impending onset of the monsoon rains, those tasks had to be completed within very tight deadlines, especially in the start-up phase, and the only way to accomplish all of these

projects on time was for the bulk of the work to be performed by contractors. In this area, also, significant shortcomings in terms of contract preparation and management were encountered (see para. 61 above).

87. The initial assessment for requirements for construction or provision of prefabricated accommodation, even with the presence of UNAMIC in Cambodia, was based on inadequate information. In addition, the mission implementation plan had underestimated the possibility of making existing buildings serviceable through local labour, as well as the remarkable speed with which local entrepreneurs would erect buildings to cater for the needs of UNTAC. The resulting unexpected availability of accommodation enabled the mission to divert several prefabricated accommodation and office complexes to the mission in Somalia, which facilitated that mission's establishment.

5. Automation and computerization

88. The need for effective automation and computerization in all components of UNTAC was obvious from the outset. The dispersion of office locations throughout the country, the poor state of communications and transport infrastructure, security considerations and time constraints, and the enormous numbers of personnel to be administered and paid, combined to make computerized recordkeeping and control systems essential to the success of the mission. Accordingly, automation was most critical to administrative support functions, though most components relied heavily on computerized systems for their work. For example, the collation and processing of the tremendous amount of data generated in the Cambodian electoral process, including voter registration, could not have been processed manually.

89. Although the introduction of computerized systems for administration of peacekeeping operations had started well before UNTAC, the unique demands of the mission motivated a broad review of potential systems to serve such large-scale needs. As a result, new systems were implemented without the time to conduct thorough field testing, and none of the staff had prior training or experience in their use. This led to numerous problems as the systems and staff, both those working with the systems and those supporting them, were "broken in". Many adaptations were required to address specific processing problems as they arose, to provide linkages or allow non-standard entries that could not be foreseen. Additionally, the use of independent systems without linkages between the Personnel, Finance and Procurement Sections led to inefficiencies, necessitating duplication of work and precluding automated control mechanisms. Since UNTAC, a comprehensive package of standardized and fully inter-operable computer systems of proven suitability are provided from the initial stages of a mission, and staff are trained in the relevant operations prior to deployment. Most missions are now also electronically linked with Headquarters, further enhancing communication and technical support. Guidelines for establishment and operation of electronic data-processing sections/units in the field missions were promulgated in 1994, with detailed instructions governing all aspects of the management, procurement, deployment, training, support and control procedures for electronic data-processing operations, including physical and information security measures.

90. The delays in the deployment of electronic data-processing staff and the delivery of computer equipment to UNTAC had consequences for every component of the mission. The shortage of computer equipment, in particular, created an enormous demand and pressure for immediate distribution when it did arrive, resulting in unreliable records and inadequate inventory control. The resulting hasty issue of computer equipment was, unfortunately, done at the expense of thorough recordkeeping and inventory control measures, which would later complicate the liquidation process (see also para. 95 below). The issue of security of United Nations assets is covered in paragraphs 91 to 94 below. However, it should be noted that electronic data-processing equipment is particularly susceptible to theft, and the provision of chains and the locking of work stations are now promoted.

F. Security

91. Given the unstable situation in much of the country, the security of UNTAC property and personnel was recognized as an administrative priority. The infrastructural and communications limitations, the distribution of thousands of staff throughout the country and the changing political situation rendered the development of a comprehensive and viable security plan extremely challenging and all the more important. By means of compartmentalizing one or more provinces in separate but coordinated plans, the civilian Security Unit was able to devise a workable mission-wide security strategy. The Security Unit worked in close cooperation with the military component of the mission, which was best equipped to provide security in case of evacuation, kept track of staff movements and location of residences, and identified and trained area security coordinators and district wardens. All mission staff were expected to familiarize themselves with the security plan.

92. UNTAC experienced widespread looting and theft of United Nations property, especially in the final stages of the mission, with the most attractive items for theft being vehicles, radio equipment, generators and laptop computers. Because of the size of the mission and its widespread distribution, securing UNTAC property was essentially the responsibility of the staff, under the guidance of the Security Unit. The military component assisted in guarding major UNTAC premises, and escorted large movements of UNTAC assets, even though those functions were not in their terms of reference. Other installations were secured by locally recruited security guards, which was not always a satisfactory arrangement: UNTAC property was often stolen with little or no resistance from those guards and sometimes with their cooperation. Attempts to address the problem of securing United Nations assets at the end of the mission included delaying the repatriation of troops for as long as possible to allow them to continue local patrols and escort convoys transporting UNTAC assets from the outlying areas, and reliance on Cambodian military personnel to protect the perimeters of UNTAC asset-holding areas in coordination with civilian security personnel and the military police. At the request of the Secretary-General (see S/26675), a number of military police were retained beyond the repatriation of the UNTAC military contingents to continue providing security during the final phase of the operation. Nevertheless, some $8 million worth of equipment was lost to theft, representing just 3 per cent of the $232 million total equipment assets of the mission, but still a substantial loss. Efforts to identify and recover lost UNTAC assets, with the assistance of the Cambodian Government as well as the Governments of neighbouring countries, were largely unsuccessful.

93. The operational environment of peacekeeping missions renders some loss of assets unavoidable. Unarmed United Nations staff, military observers and civilian police operating in sometimes hostile areas of tenuous law and order must rely on the local authorities, and on military contingents where available, to provide the necessary security. Clearly, this is not always sufficient, as illustrated by the fact that in Phnom Penh individuals and organized elements often stole UNTAC vehicles at gunpoint and in broad daylight. The presence of a competent security manager during all phases of the mission who would provide timely advice to mission staff, who could effectively supervise local security staff and who would be in a position to provide unique and otherwise unattainable information from local security contacts, could have increased the level of safety of personnel and equipment. It is interesting to note, however, that, even under circumstances where local police and judicial systems are often non-existent or ineffectual, overall the rate of thefts experienced by the missions is comparable to related crime rates in some more stable, developed countries. The main difficulty with protection of mission assets occurs when the local situation deteriorates rapidly, necessitating evacuation of the mission personnel before an orderly withdrawal can be arranged. Similarly, the final stages of missions have tended to suffer from increased theft of assets. In evacuation and withdrawal scenarios therefore efforts are made to remove portable assets with the departing personnel and to consolidate and secure the remaining assets in one location. That is, of course, considerably easier when personnel are being withdrawn at the end of mission, when plans can be made ahead of time, than for an emergency evacuation scenario. Nevertheless, in cases where the deterioration of the security situation is gradual or can be foreseen, such steps are taken as removal of non-essential assets to headquarters or another more secure location, and/or deployment of sufficient military personnel to provide more adequate security.

94. Following the example of Cambodia, subsequent missions have included protection of mission staff and assets more clearly in the terms of reference for the military and civilian police, from the initial deployment phase through the liquidation period. Member States are approached specifically to allow sufficient numbers of troops to remain in the mission area to perform guard and escort duties for assets during the withdrawal and liquidation process. Greater attention has been paid to physical security measures for work and storage areas, with installation of full perimeter fencing and security lighting now standard practice. Other measures implemented to deter thefts have included the implementation of a radio trunking system, whereby stolen communications equipment can be immediately disabled, rendering it useless to unauthorized users (and subsequently often recoverable through local markets), and similar disabling of INMARSAT satellite communications equipment, which can be traced and recovered should attempts be made to re-register it for later use. Those measures proved successful in Somalia, for example, when, after a few initial thefts, it was learned that such equipment could not be used.

G. Withdrawal and liquidation

95. The General Assembly, in its resolution 47/209 B of 14 September 1993, decided that the disposition of UNTAC assets was to be based on a hierarchy of priorities put forward by the Secretary-General (see annex IX), with all reusable assets to be retained for transfer to other existing or future United Nations peacekeeping missions wherever possible and cost-effective. A Liquidation Task Force was therefore set up in UNTAC with the primary objective of identifying assets available for dispatch to other missions or to storage. A special survey board was also convened to make recommendations on the disposal of assets whose transfer to other missions would be uneconomical, or the removal of which would be detrimental to the national rehabilitation process. In the meantime, detailed planning was undertaken to organize the practical requirements for the shipment of the outgoing assets, taking into account the following priorities for action: (1) to protect the mission's assets *in situ*; (2) to collect the assets in central locations; (3) to assess future serviceability for other mission use; and (4) to remove the assets from Cambodia as quickly as possible.

96. Once the needs of other missions had been determined, UNTAC assets were organized by type of equipment and recipient missions and plans made for the most cost-efficient schedules and itineraries. Equipment for which there was no immediate need by other missions was sent to storage, although the limited space available at the United Nations Supply Depot at Pisa required large quantities of surplus equipment to be sent to active missions with the capacity for storage (and the likelihood of future requirements, such as for generators and other equipment sent to Zagreb). Within a one-month period, some 12 shiploads of United Nations-owned assets were accordingly collected, prepared, packed and loaded. In addition to United Nations-owned assets, plans had to be made and carried out for the out-survey and repatriation of contingent-owned equipment.

97. Because of the magnitude of the mission and its assets, the haste in which those assets had to be removed from Cambodia and the shortage of staff with the necessary expertise, it was not always possible to conduct thorough physical inspections or make the necessary repairs to the mission's assets before shipment. In general, the inventory of mission assets forms the basis for determining values and making recommendations on transfer or disposal. In this case, problems encountered by the UNTAC Property Control and Inventory Unit in the early stages of the mission (notably lack of qualified staff, poor documentation of procurement/supply details and the need, as for electronic data-processing equipment, to distribute the merchandise to staff throughout the country immediately) hindered the full and accurate compilation of the inventory, with ramifications for the final reconciliation of the mission's assets at liquidation. Accounting for contingent-owned equipment, however, was better organized; the main issues there arose in verifying the values of the equipment, which would have benefited from the inclusion of an experienced military assessor. That problem will be resolved, however, under the new arrangements for the reimbursement of contingent-owned equipment (see paras. 66 and 67 above).

98. The liquidation team stayed in Cambodia for eight months after the expiration of the mission's mandate, but this period proved to be insufficient, and the final stage of the UNTAC liquidation process was

transferred to Headquarters, with a planned completion date of February 1995. However, in addition to such administrative complications as outstanding acknowledgements and discrepancies for assets transferred to other missions and other recipients, not to mention the disruptions entailed in the relocation of archives to New York, the completion of the liquidation has been further delayed by late submission of claims by troop-contributing countries. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations continues actively to follow up the UNTAC liquidation, and it is anticipated that the process will be finalized in the near future.

99. Adequate planning of the liquidation phase is as crucial as the planning for deployment and operation of a mission. Indeed, planning for withdrawal and liquidation of a mission should, to the extent possible, be included in the initial planning exercise and addressed by management at appropriate intervals during the mission. In this respect, not only do considerations of political necessity, logistical and administrative support requirements and security need to be taken into account in planning the withdrawal of personnel and assets from the mission area, but also the requirements of the liquidation team itself. For instance, the retention of essential personnel after the end of the mission mandate to provide security, logistics, medical and other support as required must be determined in conjunction with the size of the liquidation team, the residual assets required by the liquidation team and the estimated length of the liquidation period. Similarly, the anticipated residual workload must be carefully evaluated. The completion of residual administrative and support tasks is determined to a large extent by how well certain related tasks were performed and concluded during the operational phase, for example, the settlement of pending claims, payment of outstanding invoices, recovery of advances made, reconciliation of property records, and so on.

100. Building upon the experience gained through the liquidation of UNTAC, as well as subsequent missions, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is in the final stages of producing detailed guidelines for the liquidation of field missions, outlining specific planning, management, reporting and command and control standards and practices to guide officials in the field, as well as at Headquarters. The pilot project utilizing the proposed guidelines resulted in reasonable success during the liquidation of UNOSOM II, despite the enormous security pressures during withdrawal. Improvements were subsequently introduced and in future the guidelines will be used in the liquidation, and planning, of all missions.

H. Audit

101. Insofar as it was recognized that audits are integral to good management, the UNTAC administration took the initiative to request the assignment of a resident auditor to the mission, so as to ensure that management procedures and practices were in compliance with United Nations rules and regulations, to assist in the timely identification of problems, and to suggest improvements in the administrative processes. The benefits identified in having full-time auditors attached to the mission include their full familiarity with local conditions against which to assess administrative performance, and the availability of and easy access to all documentation. However, it was felt by Headquarters at the time that this would introduce a "conflict of interest", and no such assignment was made.

102. The matter was later reconsidered, and resident auditors, reporting to the Office of Internal Oversight Services, have since been assigned to other large-scale missions, with beneficial results. Indeed, the Office of Internal Oversight Services has been instrumental in organizing audits of peacekeeping missions in a more consistent and constructive manner. In addition, the Secretariat has developed the concept of roving finance officers and management review officers for peacekeeping operations and special missions, with a view to preventing, or identifying and correcting as early as possible, management weaknesses in programme implementation (see A/50/983).

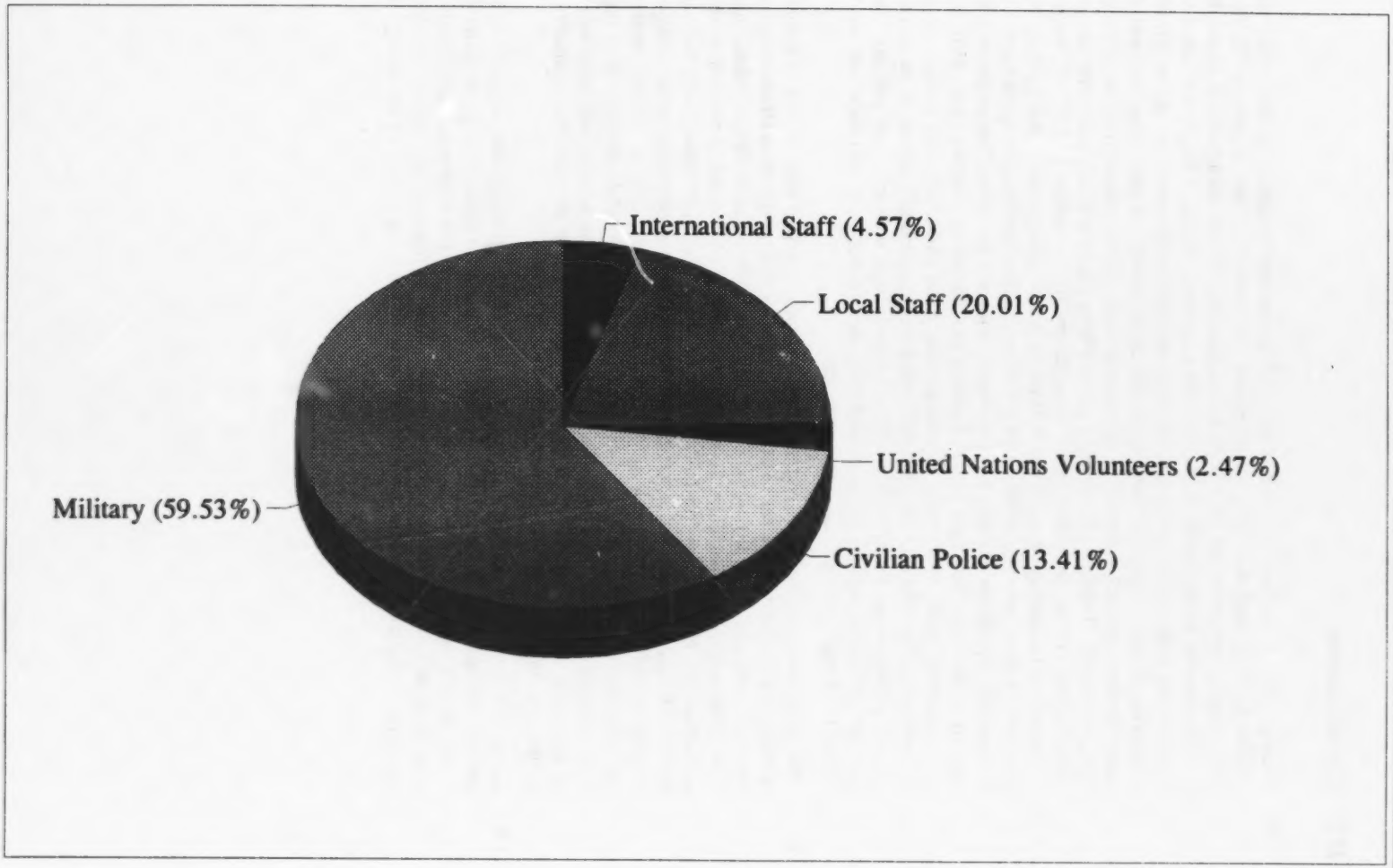
III. Conclusions

103. Even as UNTAC was meeting administrative and management challenges in Cambodia, related difficulties in other missions were also being identified and dealt with singly and collectively by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and other Secretariat offices. As UNTAC heralded the dramatic increase in large, multi-component peacekeeping operations, the experience gained in Cambodia served to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the Organization in managing such complex operations. Measures were taken to alleviate or resolve specific problems to the extent possible as they arose, while at the same time a comprehensive approach to improving the capacity of the United Nations for peacekeeping in general was being developed. Detailed information on those efforts has been transmitted to the General Assembly in various reports of the Secretary-General since the end of the mandate of UNTAC, covering such issues as improving the capacity of the United Nations for peacekeeping (A/48/403-S/26450), the use of civilian personnel in peacekeeping operations (A/48/707), effective planning, budgeting and administration of peacekeeping operations (A/48/945), procurement reform in the United Nations Secretariat (A/C.5/49/67 and A/C.5/50/13), surplus asset storage facilities and mission start-up kits (A/49/936), policy, technique and accounting issues with respect to peacekeeping assets (A/50/965), and management review officers and roving finance officers (A/50/983). Enhancing the Organization's capacity in the area of peacekeeping, as well as improving the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of field operations, are constant, ongoing processes, requiring support and assistance from the Member States and their individual and collective input of expertise, personnel and other resources.

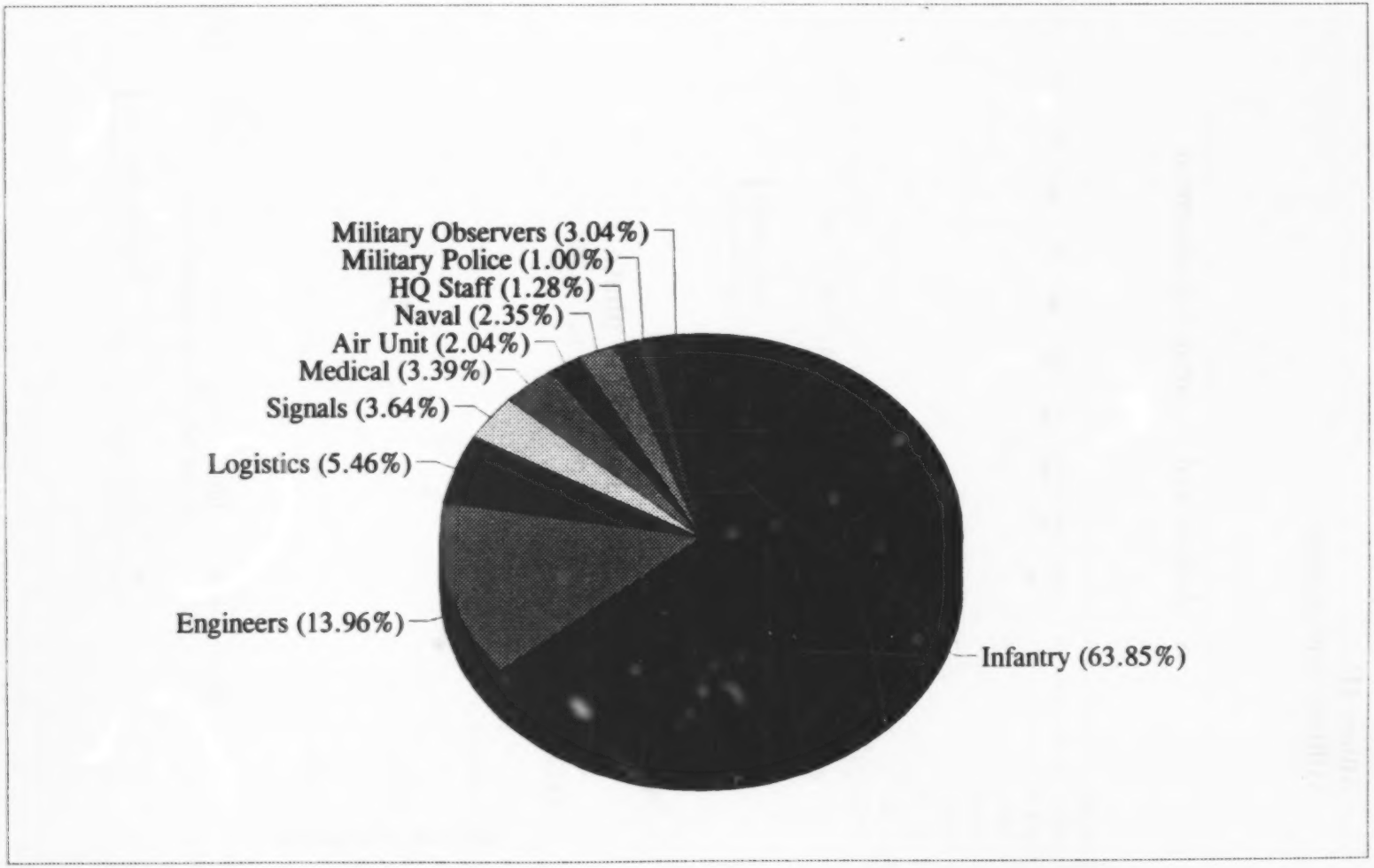
104. The thread running through the present report and many others is that the lack of human resources, the scarcity of skilled and experienced staff and the need for such staff both at Headquarters and in the field, not only constrains the ability of the Organization as a whole and of the individual missions to resolve many problems and shortcomings, but in fact also leads to the creation of some of those very problems. Unfortunately, new policies and harder work on the part of staff cannot solve the root cause of the problem. Recruitment rules and processes have been speeded up and relaxed as far as possible, but without a greater commitment from releasing departments to allow their personnel to serve on mission assignments, very little more can be done. Outside recruitment, while filling many of the gaps, does not solve the problem of the need for staff with direct experience on peacekeeping missions. Lessons need to be learned at both the institutional level, as well as the level of the individuals actually carrying out the polices and procedures on the ground.

105. Lastly, it is worth recalling that, despite the lack of personnel, the constraints imposed by a war-devastated country, the non-cooperation of one or several of the parties at different times, even despite the monsoon rains, no lack of administrative or logistic support caused the extension of the mission. The mission concluded, as scheduled, in May 1993 with the holding of free and fair elections. Cambodia returned to democratic rule, and its people, by and large, have continued to be free of the scourge of war.

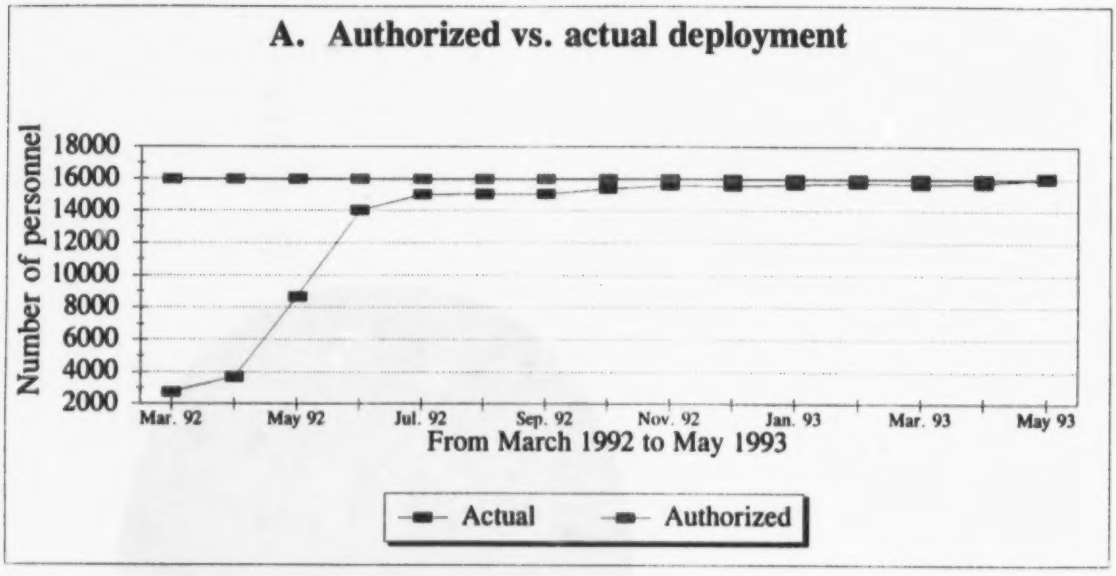
Annex I
Composition by category of personnel

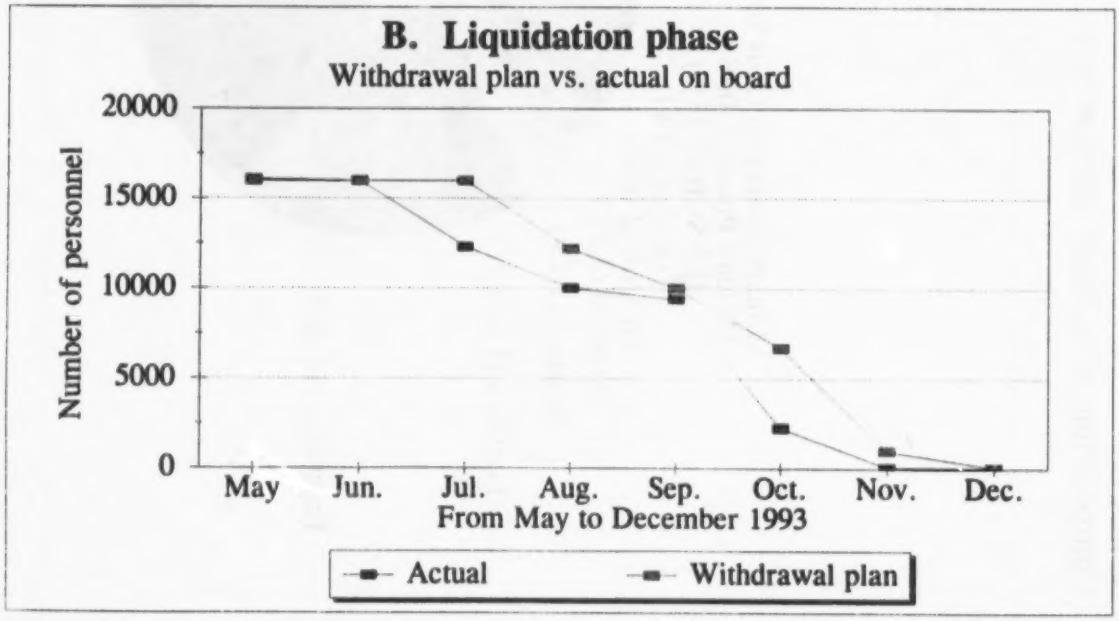


Annex II
Composition of military components

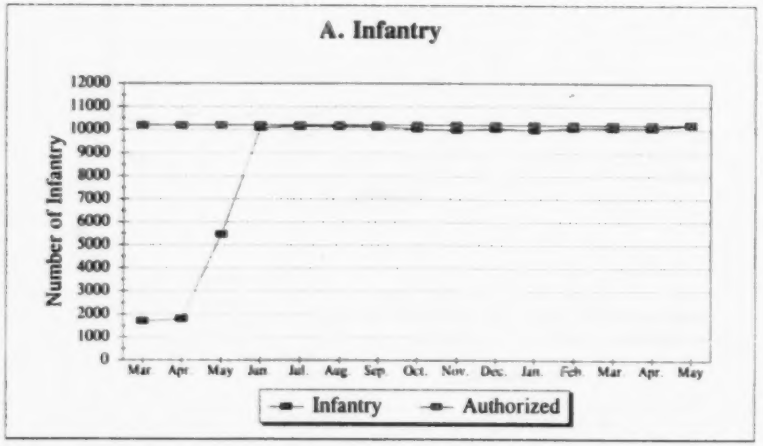


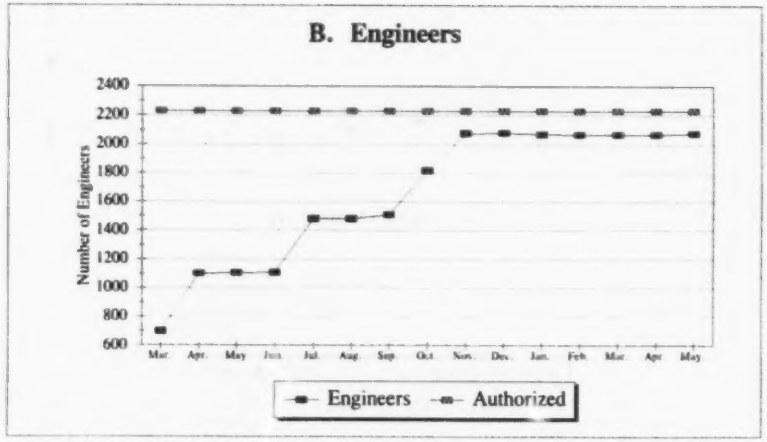
Annex III
Military components

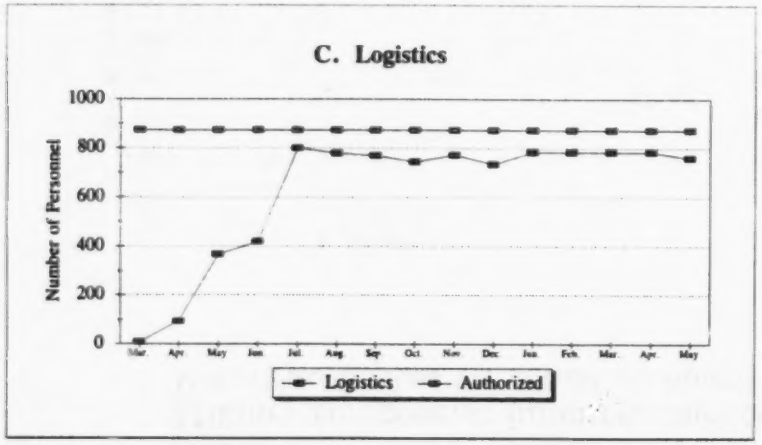


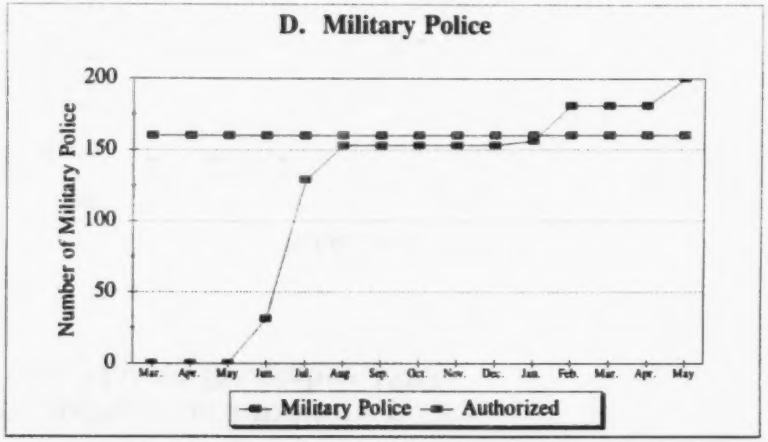


Annex IV
Military component: infantry, engineers, logistics and military police
Authorized vs. actual deployment from March 1992 to May 1993

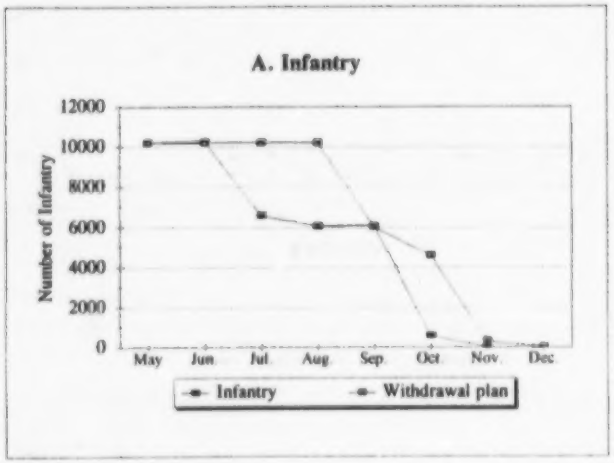


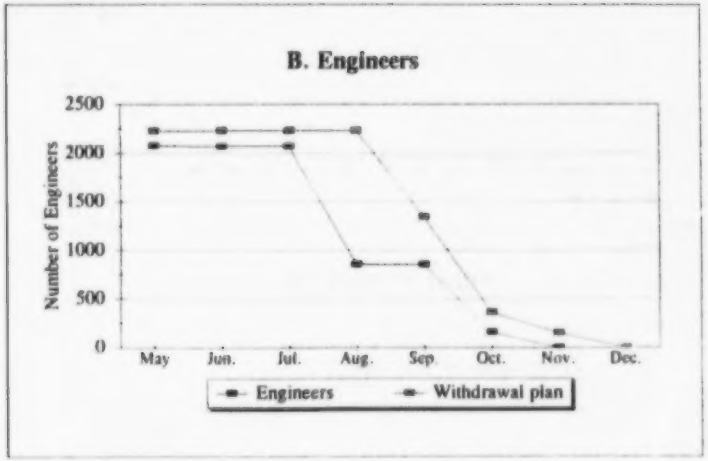


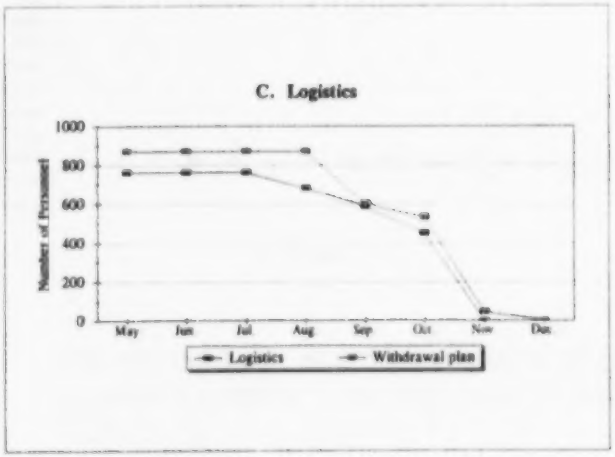


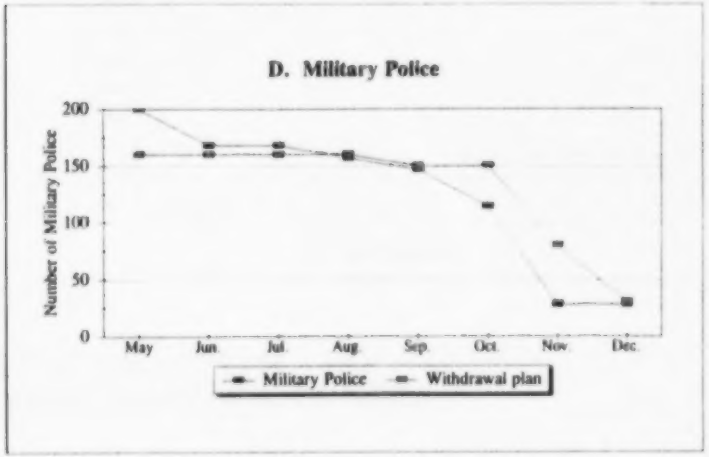


Annex V
Military component: infantry, engineers, logistics and military police
Withdrawal plan vs. actual on board from May to December 1993



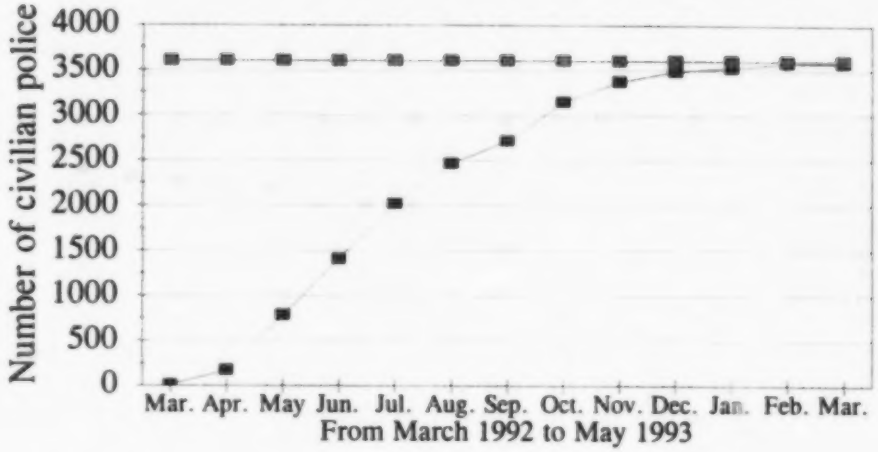






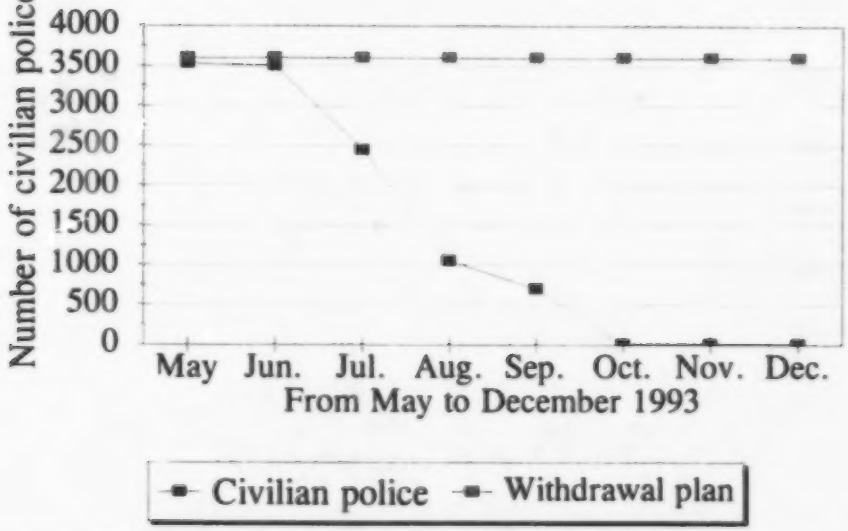
Annex VI
Civilian police component

A. Authorized vs. actual deployment



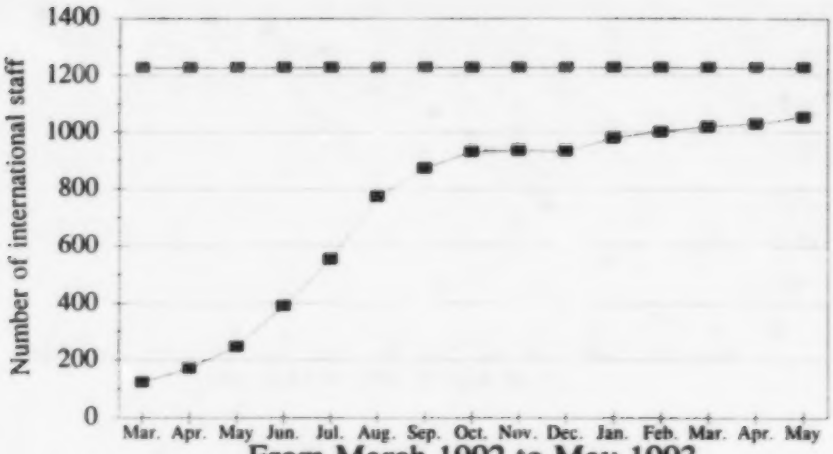
B. Liquidation phase

Withdrawal plan vs. actual on board

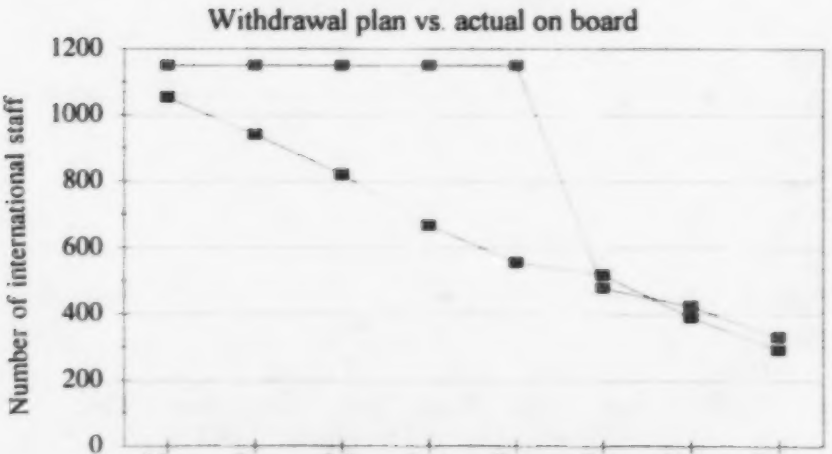


Annex VII
International staff

A. Authorized vs. actual deployment

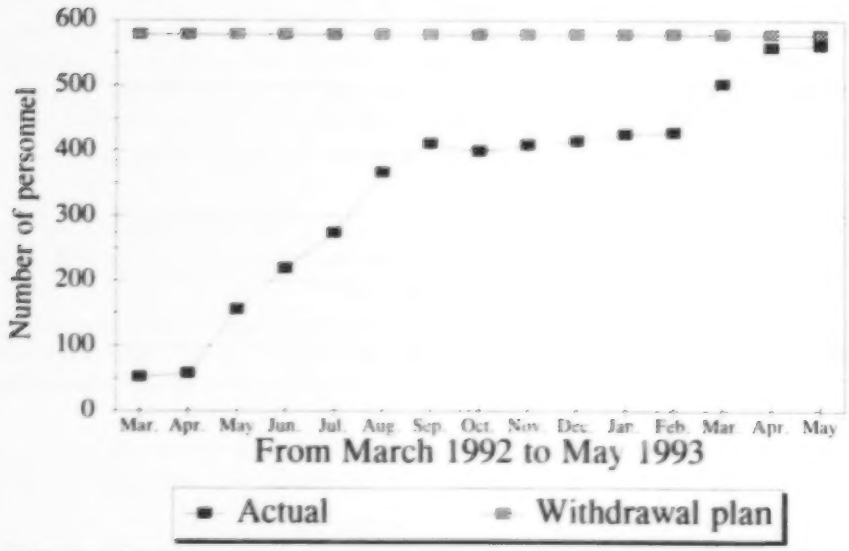


B. Liquidation phase



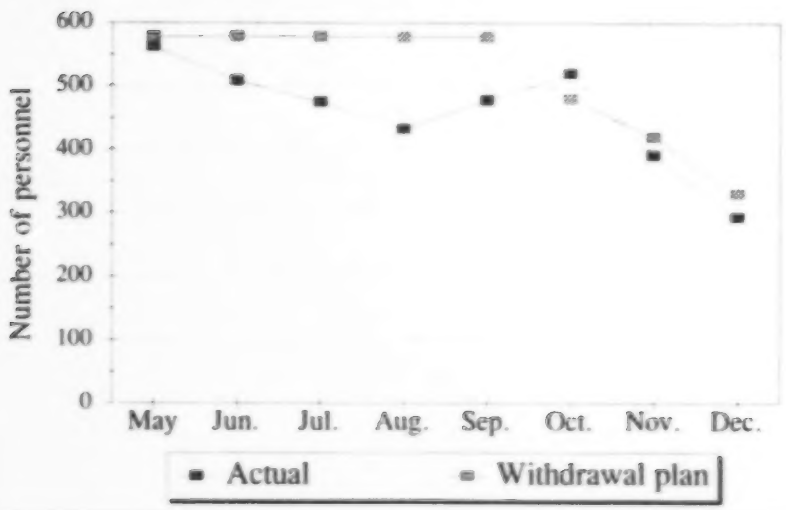
Annex VIII
Office of the Director of Administration
International administrative staff

A. Authorized vs. actual deployment



B. Liquidation phase

Withdrawal plan vs. actual on board



Annex IX
United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia: Priorities for disposal of assets from demobilizing peacekeeping missions

1. With the increasing number of peacekeeping operations worldwide, transfer of equipment to other missions or storage in anticipation of upcoming missions are the alternatives of choice, in that such actions result in overall reduced costs to the Organization. Mission administrative personnel will assume responsibility for determining the method for disposal of all mission assets, in line with the priorities described below, bearing in mind cost-effectiveness and the overall requirements of all field missions.

2. In the closing down of a peacekeeping mission, the mission's equipment and other property are to be disposed of in the following manner:

   (a) Equipment that conforms to established standardization or that is considered compatible with existing equipment will be redeployed to other United Nations operations elsewhere in the world or placed in reserve to form start-up kits for use by future missions;

   (b) Equipment that is not required by other peacekeeping missions, but which may be useful for operations of other United Nations agencies, international organizations or non-governmental organizations, and which it is not feasible to keep in reserve in terms of (a) above, may be sold to such agencies or organizations at depreciated rates;

   (c) Any unneeded equipment or property that it would not be feasible to dispose of as described above will be subject to commercial disposal within the country, following standard United Nations regulations and procedures;

   (d) Any surplus mission assets that remain after disposition under the terms of paragraphs (a) to (c) above, and/or any assets that have already been installed in the country and which, if dismantled, would in fact set back the rehabilitation process of the country, will be contributed free of charge to its duly recognized Government. This refers, in particular, to airfield installations and equipment, bridges and mine-clearing equipment. Such contributions would, of course, be reported *ex post facto* to the General Assembly. To the extent possible, it would be useful to designate in advance such assets to be contributed to the country so as to enable appropriate planning and avoid late decisions during the final stages of the mission.